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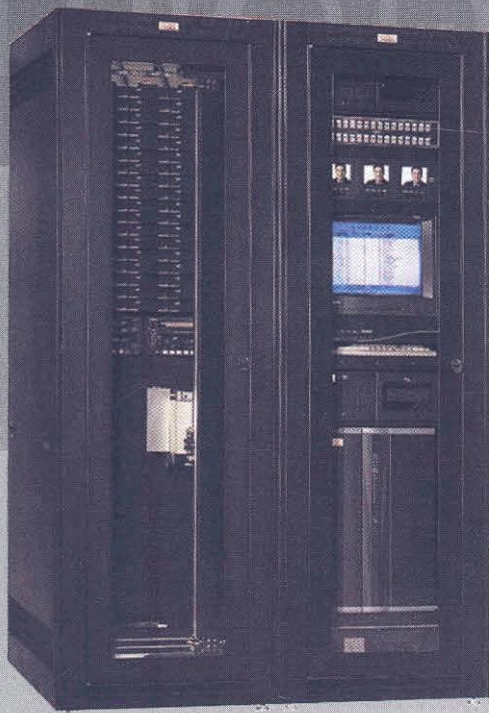
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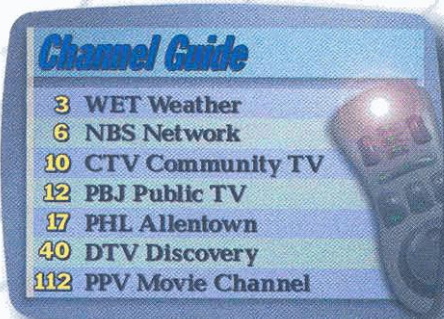
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AMC interns, National Office Staff, Office Addresses,
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and Web Resources, 1976 & 2000
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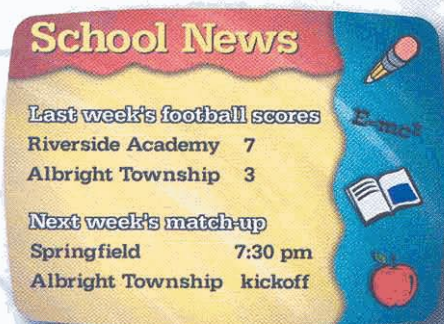
As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, Community Media Review shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.

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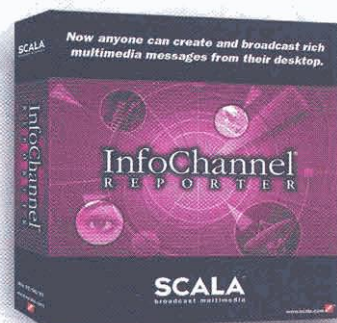


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No Longer a Thought, but an Institution

BY **BUNNIE RIEDEL**

Several years ago, I founded a non-profit organization with eighty dollars of my own money and a post office box. It took me six months to pull together a board of five. Within a year, we had hosted our first major event and five months later we hosted another one. Within five years we had over 4,000 members, twenty-one board members and had received recognition from the city council. I am pleased to say that almost ten years after I left the organization I founded, it is still going strong, and the events I created are still observed (bigger and better than ever), and they have a new energetic executive director. I feel proud that all my hard work was not in vain and that I created something so lasting that it didn't need me to survive.

That is the way it is with the Alliance for Community Media. It began with a small group of people who had a vision for how things could be, and twenty-five years later, that vision is brighter than ever. It is a most amazing thing for any non-profit to celebrate its 25th anniversary. This twenty-five year milestone is a tribute to the character of the people who have given their time and energy to the Alliance over the years.

I love hearing stories of the Alliance (formerly the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers or NFLCP) from the "old days." Many of the people who were members in 1976 are still members today. The tales are told with nostalgic affection of good times, extraordinary accomplishments and serious struggle interwoven with a continuity of vision that continues even to this day.

Regardless of how many miles have been traveled or how much water has slipped under the bridge in the years between 1976 and 2001, the prize has always been "media democracy" and all eyes have been on it.

The shared vision of achieving media democracy is the one thing that has given the Alliance for Community Media its resiliency. That cannot be overstated. It is the fire in the belly, the thing that propels this organization forward, the very thing

The shared vision of achieving media democracy is the one thing that has given the Alliance for Community Media its resiliency. That cannot be overstated. It is the fire in the belly, the thing that propels this organization forward, the very thing that has held the Alliance together through good times and bad, through the fat and the lean.



that has held the Alliance together through good times and bad, through the fat and the lean. I have heard so many times that just when everyone thought the Alliance was down for the count, it somehow got back up and back into the ring, more determined than ever. No individual or group of people can make or break an organization that is deeply rooted in the right idea, because the idea itself exists and has life outside human intervention or human interference. The only way the Alliance will ever fail is if it fails its founding principle of media democracy for all people.

So here in this twenty-fifth anniversary it is time to sing, to dance and to shout it from the roof tops, that Public, Education and Government access is no longer just a thought, but it is indeed an institution of the American landscape. You have proven its value to the community and its necessity for the quality of life in this country. You have provided a beacon to the rest of the world, something that is to be aspired to, something that is to be copied in every corner of the globe. It ain't TV, it's never been TV, and it will never be TV. Television is the vehicle, not the destination.

I suppose that's what confounds our critics. They don't get why we don't want to "do" TV. They can't imagine why we want to democratize our communities by bringing them Government Access, or why we want to improve someone's life by delivering distance learning, or why we

want to serve underserved communities and non-commercial entities. And they can't figure out why we've not only survived for all these years, but why we are continuing to grow.

Our greatest task for the next twenty-five years will be to protect and expand the vision. As new technologies come online and we begin to employ them, we must never be so dazzled by the sparkle that we are blinded to the light. We also must turn our attention to the next generation, and to making sure that those behind us catch the media democracy fever. We must mentor the next generation of cable administrators, executive directors, engineers, trainers and producers in the "access way."

I am honored to be a part of this organization during this 25th Anniversary year. Your accomplishments have been extraordinary and there is so much to be proud of. Congratulations to the Alliance for Community Media and to you, the members, who have made it strong!

Bonnie Riedel is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact her at briedel@alliancecm.org

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An Idea Whose Time Has Come

BY RIC HAYES

Wow! After twenty-five years it's finally here. I am referring to the incredible fact that the book you are holding in your hand has been twenty-five years in the making.

The world of community media that we all know and work in today is the result of thousands of people across the world working together towards a united goal. Sometimes unknowingly, and other times quite intentionally, joining together to form an unbroken chain of community. As we know every journey starts with one first step, or in the case of community media, many first steps by many different people. In this journal you will read the stories of some of the people and how this unlikely future has come to be.

You may trace the origins of community media to the free speech movement of Berkley, or perhaps to *Channels for Change* from Canada, or the *Playing to Win* computer training program in New York. Or you might point to the work of a fellow named Gutenberg and the development of the printing press or even further to the Agora in ancient Greece.

Regardless of what origin you claim, the underlying key has been human creativity mixed with appropriate technology applied to empower the individual's ability to communicate.

I think you will agree that seldom in human history has the freedom to communicate been needed more than today. The diversity in our communities and our inability to understand other cultures threatens to tear our world apart. We join together for safety and comfort in our own little enclaves, but the only way we can advance is if we cross the artificial boundaries and actually learn how to live together.

Looking back I consider myself to be blessed to have worked with some of the pioneers in community media. I am referring to people such as Don Smith of Bloomington, Indiana, and Roxie Cole of Dayton, Ohio and Steve Fortriede of Fort Wayne, Indiana. But, more importantly, in this journal you will read the stories of many of the other people who have

Community Access TV...was an idea whose time had come. This spark was driven as much by technological imperatives as it was by social activism. But the fact that the spark was passed from person to person, town to town is a beautiful statement about the human spirit.



changed their communities through the tools of technology like Peggy Gilbertson in Knoxville, Tennessee. Or people like you.

I think the fact that the concept of community Access TV sprang up simultaneously across the country and spread like wildfire indicates it was an idea whose time had come. This spark was driven as much by technological imperatives as it was by social activism. But the fact that the spark was passed from person to person, town to town is a beautiful statement about the human spirit. And spreading that spark has been one of the main purposes of the Alliance for Community Media.

The Alliance, and previously the NFLCP, did not teach one specific way that access should be defined. There was not just one "Handbook of Access Rules," no certification process, no national stamp of approval. Instead the Alliance invoked a creative force by hosting events that brought together people who were each developing their own concepts in their own hometowns of what access should, and could, become. In many

ways you might consider this to have been a great social experiment, where various people spontaneously defined access to fit their own local communities.

I know I had no idea back in 1979 when I took the step to learn to operate a camera for coverage of the city council meetings in Bloomington, Indiana that my personal journey would lead me to a twenty-year career in community media, or to be chair of this organization today. But looking back I clearly see the path that led from my first step to where I am today. And I am proud to be in the company of such fine people.

So read on about the folks who have come before us to build the foundations for community media.

Read the stories that prove that any of us can step forward as a leader. And while you are reading, imagine where you might help to take us all next.

Ric Hayes is chairman of the Alliance for Community Media and executive director of Community Access Partners of San Buenaventura, CA. Contact him at rhayes48@juno.com.

A Winning Design

The Alliance turned to its membership last year for potential designs when it needed an anniversary logo to celebrate 25 years. Nothing said it better than the one shown at right submitted by Dan Suffaletto of Dayton [OH] Access Television. Look for it throughout the year on Alliance materials. Congrats Dan.

For his efforts, Dan received free conference registration to this year's 25th Anniversary celebration in Washington, DC.



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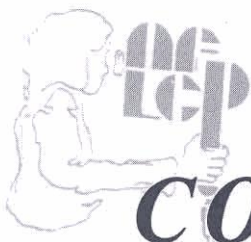
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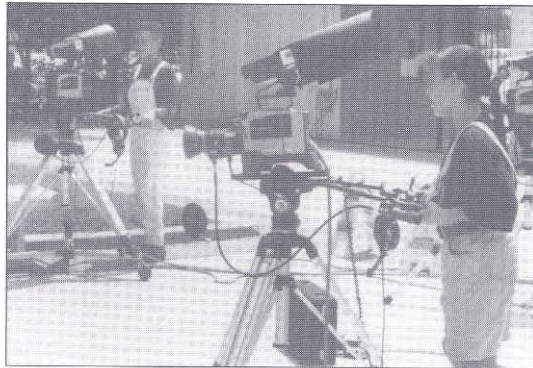
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Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Rob Brading,
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telephone 503.667.7636, or email at rbrading@mctv.org

Happy 25th to the Alliance for Community Media!

For more than 10 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

W

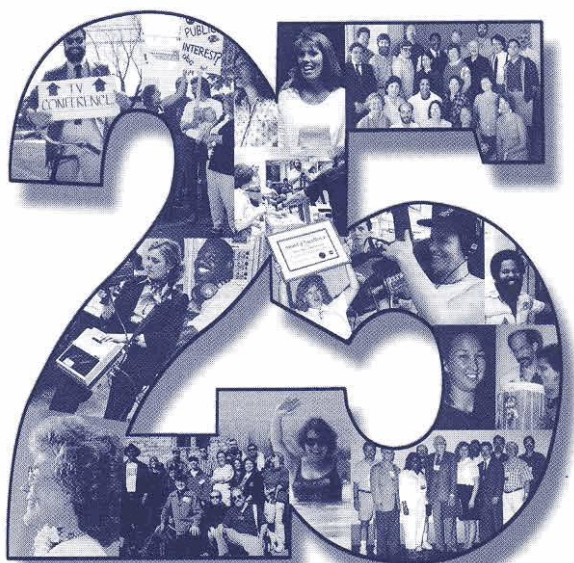
hen Dirk Koning and Tim Goodwin invited me to join them in this daunting project of capturing twenty five years of intense activity and commitment to "access," by literally hundreds of people across this country and abroad—frankly it sounded like fun—a lot of fun! And it

has been! Yet it was indeed a daunting task to figure out how to structure this 25th Anniversary edition of *CMR*. We hope that you will find it informative while entertaining, inspirational while archival, and most of all, that it will help each of you who read it to understand a little more clearly why you do what you do and perhaps, how to do it better. And along the way, if this issue manages to impress upon you the incredible importance of what you do, and the value of your commitment, as George Stoney puts it, "to our almost foolhardy utopian dream," then I personally will consider the work a great success.

Our objective has been to create a multi-faceted issue, looking to the past for our beginning principles, honoring their relevance to the present, and discovering some of our challenges for the future. We decided that we should solicit these thoughts from the people who had

been committed to this endeavor themselves: either as founding members of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP), or as part of the continuing leadership that guided us to becoming the Alliance for Community Media, or, as is the case with almost all of the authors, as frequent contributors and/or editors of previous issues of the *CTR* and *CMR*. We draw upon our own leadership.

I have become keenly aware that many, too many, of the people involved in "access" and community media today simply do not have an understanding about how the organization began, where the concepts and ideology came from, or sometimes what the larger context is for a movement entrenched in providing meaningful community ►



1976-2001

"access" to media and technology. So the question becomes: How does our basic principle—*commitment to media-democracy and social change*—translate to what is done on a local level in day to day operations? Not a simple question to answer.

This issue has taken shape by telling some of the stories of our beginning, and who better to do so than many who were there at the time. To put it all in context we include a broad-stroke history of the communications environment along with several timelines. When considering where we are today, I turned to George Stoney, mentor and leading visionary from the outset, to ask for his perspectives. His identification and examination of seven specific points of concern became a yardstick for our approach to areas we explore further.

After twenty-five years, what have we learned about the intrinsic tension between the First Amendment speaker—*personal expression*—and the "goal of an uninhibited, robust and open marketplace of ideas"—*the public good*? This difficult principle is at the core of the long-standing debate about the allocation of resource issues and 'first come, first served' policies. Education and training have been cornerstones to all that we do. The intrusion of commercial television into all of our lives has shaped our training practices toward the inclusion of media literacy. Yet the shift in focus to technology-based training—teaching the right buttons to push—has taken us away from the important role as social activist. Teaching citizens how to use the tools and resources to make socially relevant programs about their communities, and the issues of the day, was our guiding objective. Is it time for re-evaluation of our effectiveness, especially in light of the current emphasis to focus heavily on new digital technologies? All of these concerns are seminal to the direction we will follow, and lead directly to the importance of meaningful community media leadership development.

Although much of the focus of the Alliance tends to fall on "public access" support because it involves the individual and the community, a significant component of our mandate involves the educational and government institutions as well. The importance of collaboration and commonly shared objectives hope-

fully will become a fundamental goal, for the well being of all three, the *P*, the *E* and the *G*.

In the past, the heated battles over legislative challenges, which all too often threatened our very existence, served as lively, often crisis-driven educational opportunities for members, community leaders, boards and staff. They brought everyone into a dialogue about the principles inherent to our existence and within the regulatory struggles.

Today, much of the new membership has had little exposure to—or reason for—understanding those underpinnings. The very mechanisms that constitute our financial base are given a limited dialogue around the time of renewal. Yet what we do on a day-to-day basis is directly linked to our perceived value in the cities we serve, and therefore becomes directly related to the outcomes of the renewal process. We prepare for renewal every day. To tickle further interest and investigation into this aspect of our profession, we include an analysis of past and future regulatory issues. It is an important part of everyone's job in "access."

A celebration of twenty-five years of Alliance for Community Media history includes struggles and achievements. Just as access is unique within each of our communities, so the development of access took its own distinct path as it spread across the country. With the primary interest in establishing a strong grass roots involvement, right from the outset, the NFLCP identified regional-development as the structure best suited for this "federation of local programmers." So, we decided to honor that, and asked each Region to tell their own history, creating a quilt of experiences to illustrate our overall history. I thank all those who got out old boxes of photos, dusted off long forgotten files, and called upon the "old guard" in each of the regions to use as the memory bank from which to build their recollections.

In the last pages of the issue, as space

permitted, is a section of lists, resources, timelines and acknowledgements, which are intended to be useful, as well as archival.

There are many more ideas to be found in the pages that follow. A bit like a treasure hunt, I hope you will find words that inspire. One such jewel is the "International Perspectives," and there are lots of pearls of wisdom to be found in the quotes and sidebars...so, happy reading!

In closing, there are so many to whom I am sincerely grateful for assistance in putting this issue together. I thank you all,

and we extend apologies if you do not see your work included. We are all producers and hopefully understand that great things always hit the edit-room floor. But a few special thanks are in order: to Dirk for courting me for this job and then successfully flattering me into doing it. It has been hard, sometimes frustrating, but ultimately a great pleasure; to Tim, for making this project a great learning experience with a lot of late night fun; and to Lee Ann, for being as always my true

blue friend and indispensable assistant.

And last, but by no means least. I'd like to thank my husband, Charles. For well over twenty-five years, he has given his support, patience and good council—notwithstanding the countless number of times my work for the NFLCP and Alliance has taken precedence over my presence at home and food in the refrigerator. For that contribution to our cause, I hope you will all join me in thanking him!

Rika Welsh is a founding member of the NFLCP and spent ten years the NFLCP and then the Alliance for Community Media Boards of Directors. She served as chair of the Northeast Region, first chair of chairs, chair of organizational development, has organized two national NFLCP/Alliance conferences in Boston, and finally is editor-in-chief of this issue. She was executive director of Malden Access Television for twelve years and is now a senior consultant with the Buske Group. Contact her at: rikaqui@aol.com



How the Alliance Began Upstairs at 144 Bleecker St.

Recalling the Summer of Tough Love

BY SUSAN BEDNARCZYK

The founders of the Alliance have a lot in common with Madonna. They produced a lot of videos and got people talking about community morals and free speech. But did you know that the Alliance and Madonna's film career both got their starts at 144 Bleecker Street in Greenwich Village?

Ten years before *Desperately Seeking Susan* was shot downstairs at the old Bleecker Street Cinema, the Alliance was born upstairs one hot summer day in 1976. It was NYU's Alternate Media Center (AMC), and it was my first job after graduate school in 1973.

AMC was run by Red Burns and George Stoney, who got space from NYU School of the Arts to run community cable TV experiments with a grant from the Markle Foundation. In Canada, they put media into everyday people's hands and used it to facilitate social change (see sidebar). Now they were trying to replicate this in New York.

These were the early days of NYC public access—big broadcasters ruled, video art was in its infancy, and low-tech production was not taken seriously. People looking like hippies still walked through the Village. NYC cable rates were \$6 per month.

Red was thin and snappy, wearing blue jeans and tooled cowboy boots. George looked and dressed pretty much like he does now. They both walked very fast—even if it was just around the corner to the La Guardia Place storefront that housed Manhattan's first public access center, offering cameras and microphones so that people with something to say could say it.

Cable TV penetration was under seven percent. A 1971 *New York Times* article about Red and George intrigued the president of ATC, a Denver cable MSO, who contacted AMC.

Two years later, Red's people were operating a public access center in ATC's Reading, Pennsylvania system. Other community video centers began emerging elsewhere.

While Red focused on MSO partnerships, George took a different tack. As a noted documentary filmmaker, George traveled to film schools, encouraging students to abandon truth-or-dare and "gotcha" documentary styles in favor of more socially responsible approaches. He now expanded his message to urge young people to take up do-it-yourself video to encourage community dialog. In 1973, George convinced the National Endowment for the Arts to fund a four-year program to enable videomakers to experiment in local programming for cable systems.

I began working with George, and Bob Pinto at AMC the summer of 1973 to run this NEA program. I had never made a video,



Access Center at 144 Bleecker Street in the early '70s.

but I could type. I learned new words like "coax," "local origination," and "headend."

My first task was to help George and Bob encourage people to apply for the grant. Piece of cake! The intern job paid \$8,600 per year, plus you got a video rig and three trips to New York. Applicants had to have a sponsor for half the salary and specify their project's focus.

By October, nine lucky interns were selected. Some were sponsored by cable companies; some by nonprofits. Since big cities weren't wired, all were in smaller cities and towns, from New Hampshire to California. Projects included programming with churches, arts groups, libraries, schools, and youth groups.

In January 1974, the interns showed up at 144 Bleecker for their first meeting. Several days of non-stop activity facilitated bonding among the group—making tapes, screening videos, visiting neighborhood video centers, eating great food, and listening speakers. It was an unending stream of remarkable people, experiences, ideas, and videos.

Exhausted and exhilarated, the new friends returned to their communities to gear up. I phoned everyone weekly, and dispatched tapes documenting each person's progress. Over time, I viewed and archived over 200 hours of intern programming in AMC's library.

A few times each year, either George or Bob would visit each intern and get community people fired up about the possibilities of community television—like video Johnny Appleseeds. ▶

This personal touch and the bonds that formed kept the interns going between trips to New York City, helping them to weather ups and downs with management and/or city politics. They couldn't wait to reassemble in New York for the summer workshop to tell tales, show tapes, and recharge.

It seemed a shame for the group to loose touch after their year, so we made an offer to their employers. If you hired the intern at full salary, they could keep the video rig and still attend the NYC workshops. Everyone was elated. Most stayed with the program.

We solicited more applications and selected a second set of interns. That January, everybody learned about two-way technology and why the cable TV business was going to boom. George and Red had taught us to pay attention to regulatory issues in Washington. They spoke at the FCC and other forums with eloquence and passion that filled us with awe.

Our gatherings continued at 144 Bleecker into 1976, when the third intern group joined us. However, now access was in danger. The FCC wanted to deregulate cable and change the access rules. George was filming in Ireland and Red was busy launching NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program. We were concerned that Red and George were not mounting an effective case at the FCC.

At the summer workshop, we asked Red and George to do something...quick. We were stunned by their response. They said no. They said that we should go to the FCC ourselves. There was dead silence in the room. The thought of little, long-haired video people standing center-stage at the FCC...well, it was hard to sit there at 144 Bleecker and make that mental leap.

George and Red stuck to their tough-love position. You all have real communities, real constituencies, and can prove to the FCC the value of retaining local access to media, they explained. The FCC only knew about access from sensationalist press articles—how Manhattan's channels were filled with vanity shows, exhibitionists, and hosts using four-letter words. Why not go and change their minds?

We all swallowed hard. Our commanders had just ordered us to jump out of the plane, count to ten, and pull the ripcord. We didn't realize it then, but it was one of the most important turning-points in our twenty-something lives...the moment from which everything else flowed.

It took a few days for the shock to subside and a plan to emerge. Why not form a federation of cable programmers? Why not think up a name and submit a position paper to the FCC?



144 Bleecker Street, NYC, as of 1 June 2001, now home to the Elbow Room.

Why not see if places like Ann Arbor and Austin would want to join? Why not hold workshops like the ones at AMC?

Mike Aronson and Mickey Brandt came up with the name—National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. We formed a steering committee and carved up the country into regions to be organized by different interns. I sorted the AMC mailing list and sent out the appropriate portions. The Northeast Region convened first

and wrote NFLCP's philosophy statement (see sidebar). Other regions followed.

Nancy Jesuale told the Mid-Atlantic gathering that TelePrompTer wanted to charge hourly fees to cablecast access in Johnstown. It was a perfect reason for the NFLCP to talk to the FCC. David Hoke would set up a meeting at the FCC, and the people closest to DC would go—Mickey, David, Nancy, and me.

When the FCC staff learned that we would show videotapes, they scheduled us for an open-mike, en banc session in front of all the commissioners! No one there had ever seen public access, so it would be a novelty within the usual parade of lawyers and lobbyists.

We all swallowed hard. Our commanders had just ordered us to jump out of the plane, count to ten, and pull the ripcord. We didn't realize it then, but it was one of the most important turning-points in our twenty-something lives...the moment from which everything else flowed.

That November, we used George's stop-and-start technique to showcase access programming for the commissioners. We took turns, finishing with Nancy, who made a case for cablecasting access tapes free of charge. We answered their questions, including whether access programmers were "practicing for jobs in broadcasting." It went really well. Several weeks later, we learned that the FCC clarified the rules in favor of the Johnstown programmers. NFLCP had worked!

Although the AMC intern program ran into 1977 for a fourth year, I put most of my energies into helping NFLCP people stay in touch and keep things glued together. David continued working the FCC and gave our first testimony before the House Communications Subcommittee. We contacted video centers across the country and tried to get funding for a satellite link-up between centers. Although it never came off, we made new allies and learned about access facilities.

By 1978, when the intern program ended, local programming had been seeded in 24 communities in 12 states. I left AMC to be a production assistant in the film industry. Sue Buske took over

from me as the steering committee coordinator. The NFLCP had its first national meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, where we elected a board and met our colleagues from across the country.

George continued teaching, traveling, and speaking at NFLCP events. Red began her interactive telecoms program at NYU and trained the generation that would later fuel Silicon Alley. The interns and I stayed in touch over the years, as people created access centers, wrote franchises, became consultants, retired early on cable TV stock options, or went on to other careers.

Did it all turn out the way George envisioned it would? Do people use access to promote community dialog? Do access centers teach techniques of socially responsible media making? Do they measure audience reach or use other measures of success? Did committed people replace those of us who left the access "movement"? You'll have to tell me.

The building at 144 Bleecker is still standing, but neither Madonna nor the interns would recognize it. It looks pretty run down, which is a little sad. On the other hand, directly across the street stands The Bitter End—the club where *Peter, Paul & Mary* recorded their famous album in the '60s and where so many folksingers got their start. After 40 years, it's still going strong as a songwriters' showcase—offering a small stage and microphone so that people with something to say can say it.

Maybe it's the neighborhood, but what began 25 summers ago does not seem distant when I stand in front of 144 Bleecker and look across the street.

Susan Bednarczyk has worked as a telecommunications industry consultant for strategic, financial, accounting, and Wall Street firms for the past 20 years. Her first appearance on public access TV was in Madison at the 1978 Wisconsin Dairy Expo with a Holstein cow in an interview by Gene Carey. She, unlike Madonna, has never made a music video.



In the '70s.

In the Beginning...

Early community video and the *Challenge for Change* program

"As we developed it at the [Canadian] Film Board, *Challenge for Change* was a social contract between the people who were in charge of a government program—an agency or a social service—and the people who were the recipients of the program or service, designed to find out how they felt about what was being done and what they would like to see changed...In some units we trained using film, but mostly it was videotape."

— George Stoney commenting in 1983 on the Canadian Film Board program in which he and Red Burns participated prior to founding NYU's Alternate Media Center in 1971

AMC philosophy and early public access centers

"We don't have enough money, and I don't think any foundation would have enough money, to give everybody video equipment. We have evolved a way of working in which we attempt to set up projects which can be self-generating. We will go into a community with resources, expertise, and advice; ultimately, the project has to be taken over by the community."

— Red Burns, Executive Director of Alternate Media Center, 1972

Statement of Purpose of the NFLCP

The electronic media occupy a significant place in the lives of the American people. But after 50 years of operation, the current system of broadcasting has yet to allow true public access to this national resource. The public has been kept ignorant of the long-term affects of the media on their values and mores, and of the policy decisions that affect the media. They also lack the access to the tools which would allow them to use media technology for their own community's needs and interest. Perpetuating this media ignorance only leads towards a controlled population; the NFLCP advocates a national access policy as one step in combating this ignorance.

While a policy of limited access may have made sense in the days of limited spectrum space, the results of new broadband communications technologies makes this policy both undemocratic and obsolete. The NFLCP affirms that citizens access to the electronic media is a BASIC RIGHT under the First Amendment.

— Written by the Northeast Region/ NFLCP, 1976



Delegates meeting in 1978

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A Paella called Access

INGREDIENTS, TIME & TEAMWORK

BY SUE BUSKE

It seems like 100 years ago (although it was only 1977) that a group of people met at the access center where I worked in Dubuque, Iowa to plan the first NFLCP national conference. David Hoke, Margie Nicholson and others drove hundreds of miles to attend this initial planning meeting.

Little did we know what the future held for access and community media. We had taken on the challenge placed before us by George Stoney to continue the "community building" that was started by him and the Alternate Media Center in the early '70s.

Since that time many people have invested their blood, sweat, and tears (or maybe it was laughs, debates, and late night walks in DC to "Abe's Place"—the Lincoln Memorial) to further the cause. During these 25-plus years, many wonderful life long friendships have been built with an amazing diversity of people who share common goals.

I remember hundreds of hours of NFLCP Board meetings, followed by all of us getting together to prepare meals where we would eat, drink, talk, debate, and (most importantly) laugh. There were Saturday night shopping excursions by board members—some went for groceries at the Grand Union in Arlington; others stocked up at the fish market on the Potomac. Rika Welsh once made a seafood paella for 30 that we still talk about. All of us were starved (and quite intoxicated) at 10:30 pm when it was finally ready. But the effort and time required was worth every second—the paella was fabulous!

Our work in access is a lot like that paella: it needs lots of ingredients, time and teamwork, but the outcome is more than worth the wait. The work we do is not just a job. It's a commitment to help develop and preserve our community. We all contribute in our own small way.

What do we do? *We teach!*

We teach—how to speak with the tools of the electronic media.

We teach—community building and community organizing.

We teach—the importance of tolerance and openness to the rainbow of people and viewpoints that are found in our communities.

We teach—by bringing people and technology together and by building bridges and partnerships between diverse peoples and entities.

Yes, sometimes it seems like just a job, a job you could leave to do something that's easier, that could make a lot more money, and allows more free time to spend with your family and friends. Sometimes you ask—Is it really worth the hassle?

Does this really make a difference? Will the cable industry ever really understand or willingly support our efforts? Will the city be willing to negotiate what is best for the community in the long term or take the quick and easy way out?

Then you meet people like Georgia, who takes so much joy in producing her videos with kids in the neighborhood. Or Susan,

who produced a wonderful documentary about local folks who piled food and medical supplies in an old yellow school bus and drove it to their community's sister city in Nicaragua. Or Marc and Fred, city staff members who have visions of what community media and connectivity can do for their communities and back it up with the commitment, patience and skill to endure a multi-year process of negotiating new cable franchises to achieve their visions.

These are just a few examples of what makes our work more than just a job. I know that each of you have many more.

About Longevity and Stability. As I look around at some of the people who work at community access centers in Tucson, Grand Rapids, Sacramento, Boston and other locations, I am amazed to see how many staff members have worked there for well over ten years. Such a level of stability and longevity speaks well of the work that has been done in those communities.

People like George Stoney, Dirk Koning, Lauren-Glenn Davitian, Sam Behrend, LaMonte Ward, Barbara Popovic, Tony Riddle, Susan Fleischmann, Deb Vinsel, Fernando Moreno, Mindy



1981 at an NFLCP board meeting.

Snyder, Greg Vawter, Mary Shanahan-Spanic, Jim Horwood, Rika Welsh, Randy VanDalsen, Joe Van Eaton, Julie Omelchuck and Tim Goodwin have dedicated so many years of their lives and great skills to keeping the vision of community access alive, well, and vital. These are just a handful of the people who continue their efforts to help community access and the Alliance. This speaks well for the Alliance, their communities, and this field.

Challenges. There have always been and continue to be challenges to access at almost every level. Will the cable industry ever understand or willingly support access? As an industry, probably not. With the rapid consolidation of ownership and regionalization of cable systems, the huge corporations that own them will probably become more and more removed from the realities of the local communities they serve. Over the past 25 years there have been some people at regional and corporate levels within the cable industry who have quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) supported access. But they have been and probably always will be the exception rather than the rule.

When they negotiate a franchise agreement, cable companies



To Be 25 Again!

Ah, to be 25 again. My primary existence these days is reproduced on my web page, www.nicholasjohnson.org, on the off chance any of your readers may be asking themselves, "Well, if the old commissioner isn't dead yet, what the hell is he doing with himself anyway?" and are curious enough to want to find out. My congratulations to you, Rika, and all your staff and colleagues, who took the dream of meaningful media democracy and lived lives that made it happen. Congratulations and happy 25th anniversary!

— Nicholas Johnson, former FCC Commissioner and the 1985 recipient of the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications.

Vision, Ideals & Friendship

Congratulations to all of us on the 25th Anniversary of the NFLCP/Alliance for Community Media. During my tenure as board chair from 1983-1985, and throughout my involvement with the Alliance, I have been inspired by the leadership, commitment, and compassion of access activists. In community after community, from Boston to Chicago to Maui, I have seen the power and diversity of access producers and programming. As access continues to grow over the next 25 years, I know that we can rely on our vision, our ideals, our friendship and the strength of our (grass)roots.



— Margie Nicholson

invariably want to provide as little as possible in the form of community benefits. They see support for PEG access and community media centers as unwanted and unnecessary expenditures that reduce the profitability of the corporation. They fail to recognize—even when presented with scientifically-gathered data—that many communities want local programming and access to the tools of technology, and are willing to dedicate resources toward that end, potentially to the benefit of the cable operator.

Local governments aren't perfect either. Not nearly enough communities conduct studies to determine their telecommunication needs. Too many of them don't seize the opportunities provided by federal law to negotiate a cable communication franchise that truly responds to community needs and interests.

Once established, community media centers face a daily barrage of challenges that range from the relatively simple ("this camcorder doesn't work") to the incredibly difficult (staff layoffs due to budget cuts from the city or other funding agencies). And there always seems to be some production team that likes to see how far they can push the program content envelope.

Ah, but managing a community media center would be so boring if we didn't have these little challenges, right? And speaking of challenges...

A Vision for the Future. I remember when a keynote speaker at the 1979 NFLCP National Convention in Austin, Texas told us that access wouldn't be around within a few years.

Well, community access is still here and growing 22 years later! We now speak of community media, not just community TV. New community media centers are opening every year in places that never had access before, because of the work of people who could foresee what these centers can do for their communities.

Community media centers throughout the world are looking for ways to exchange skills, knowledge, and information. Access to tools like the Internet is helping make that exchange easier.

So how do we keep the vision alive?

▲ Continue to teach and provide the public with the tools and skills needed to use today's electronic media.

▲ Collaborate and build partnerships with a broad cross section of the "community"—local, regional, national, and international.

▲ Advocate for the public's right to have access to all media.

▲ Become smart and effective communicators with elected officials and their staff at the local, state, and federal levels, ensuring that they understand the importance of the community communications.

▲ Most important, enjoy your work and nurture the friendships that come with it.

As we look back at our years of work in community media, whether they are a few or many, the things that make us smile and keep us going are the friendships with people like Rika, Randy, Dirk, and Jim and the work of people like Georgia, Susan, Fred and Marc, whose efforts have had such a positive impact in each of their communities.

Sue Buske continues her work toward the sound foundation of PEG Access and community media center resources in cities across the country as president of The Buske Group, a Sacramento-based consulting firm with over 15 years of commitment to the ideal.

The Praxis of Access

ACCESS & GLOBAL ACTIVISM

BY JOHN W. HIGGINS

The 1920s & 1930s. Around the world, media-visionaries struggle toward a dream involving a relatively new media outlet: radio. The vision sees radio devoted to shared communication among people, rather than a one way transmission device for selling commercial products held by a few companies. In Germany, Bertolt Brecht reflects the vision, stating “Radio could be the most wonderful public communication system imaginable . . . could be, that is, if it were capable not only of transmitting but of receiving, of making the listener not only hear but also speak, not of isolating him but of connecting him.” The global movement is but a recent manifestation of grassroots-oriented, democratic media. In the U.S., the general population shares the belief that radio should stay commercial-free — dominated by the educators and non-profit groups who developed the new medium. The commonly held perspective sees radio as a tool to uplift and unify the nation's people, rather than an instrument of crass commercialism. The movement builds on the work of radical film makers and photographers, struggling against domination of information by the mainstream film industry.

The 1940s & 1950s. In the U.S., struggles to utilize media technologies for non-commercial, grassroots communication focus on the emerging technologies of FM radio and broadcast television. Across the globe, community-based radio stations emerge, based on local social movements. In 1947 the tin miners’ union in Bolivia starts broadcasting from a chain of stations in the mountains. Over the years, the miners defend their stations from a variety of threats — including government troops attempting to shut down the miners’ voice. In 1949, community radio is born in the U.S. in the form of progressive KPFA in Berkeley, California during an era of anti-communist hysteria and government repression. Soon after, the Pacifica network is born.

The 1960s & 1970s. The options for democratic, grassroots media expand to include the emerging technology of portable video equipment for the creation of community-based programs. Those testing the limits of the new medium include activists, artists, and long-standing community-based documentary film groups. Experiments with the new medium take place, among other places, in Britain, Mozambique, France, Chile, and the U.S. Canada’s success with using film and video for social change, the “Challenge for Change” program, is noted by activists intent on adapting technology to the purpose of progressive social change.

At this same time in the U.S., the 20- year-old technology of cable television is moving from rural to urban areas, providing a window of opportunity for the distribution of community-based communication. An unusual alliance of cable company executives, media activists, and government regulators forges an agreement that will open the door for community television channels — known as “access channels” — for public, educational, and governmental use.

The social environment of the late 1960s and early 1970s cultivates the sense that social institutions are ineffective and a centralized broadcast media are particularly culpable in perpetuating social inequities. Cable television is cast as a technology that will help bypass centralized control of information, and provide alternative sources of information and opinion to an information-starved public. Access channels will help the de-centralization of information and authority, and reinvigorate the social fabric of the republic — developing an involvement in the workings of the democracy at the grassroots level. This is to happen by including everyday people in the creation of television programs and the discussion of current events of significance to the community certain to be the focus of these programs.

Within this social environment emerges the Alternate Media Center, created by George Stoney and Red Burns, and fed by the accumulated knowledge of the “Challenge for Change” program and similar experiments involving media for social change from around the world over the decades. One program of the Alternate Media Center places interns with cable companies across the U.S., to utilize access channels and develop facilities that will become neighborhood meeting centers, based around community media.

These interns, in the parlance of the development discourse, become “animateurs”—“social animators”—“change agents.” They foster structures and practices based on group-held interpretations of representative democracy. They share a vision of a more equitable society run less from the centralized positions of corporate and governmental power; and more from the grassroots — where everyday people have more of an impact on their day to day lives and the direction of the human race.

By the mid 1970s, the interns soon find themselves accompanied by a growing number of interested individuals and groups intent on using media as a tool with which to change society. These social and media activists form an organizing group, the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP), to share experiences, promote the use of community access channels and facilities, and lobby for community access to a variety of distribution channels and the democratization of media systems. The NFLCP (renamed the Alliance for Community Media) begins publication of a newsletter which later becomes the *Community Television Review* (CTR, renamed *Community Media Review*, CMR) to share ideas and help strengthen the bonds of community within the group. The organization continues forging links with allies in the long -term struggle for the democratization of media and establishment of a more equitable society—globally and locally. In so doing, the Alliance continues a tradition of global social activism described in this essay in the 1920s and '30s.

Reassessing Access Philosophy. It’s helpful to occasionally revisit the “big picture” of access within the broader context of global social movements and activist ideology. For one thing, the long history of alternative media shows us that a grassroots medi-

Award Winners Reflect

I could never have imagined that I would get a lifetime service award in an arena which did not exist when I was planning my life. It is a double honor to



receive an award named after someone almost twice my age who still has not finished his lifetime of work. I still have so far to go—thank God.”

I think the most important two things the Alliance has provided me are one, Shared Information: I never could have succeeded as a program manager or executive director without the shared knowledge base of like-minded people doing a similar job, and two, I would not have survived under the pressure without the comradeship and understanding of those “friends-in-arms” with whom I commiserated and partied and communed once per quarter or once per year.

My insights do you have for the future of community media? Mediums change. Laws change. Words, images and sounds change. What doesn't change is the need of the organism to shout into the vastness of space. We are here and this is what we believe is important!”

— Anthony Riddle, 1998 co-recipient of the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications

Red Burns makes one of the most important statements in the history of access documentary *Everyone's Channel* when she says, “We had to remember that this was not about TV, this is a community information system.” She was describing the Alternate Media Center's Reading, Pennsylvania project in the late '70s that was funded by the National Science Foundation and linked many community buildings including senior centers, city hall, schools as well as the viewer at home in a two-way interactive TV system.



This telecommunications infrastructure provided and still does for a programming environment for live, call-in and live, two-way programming between the people of the Reading. If we can balance this goal of enhancing community communication and interaction along with our goal of providing a 1st Amendment Forum, our centers would be less vulnerable to political pressure.

— Chuck Sherwood, 1990 recipient of the Buske Leadership Award

um can survive and flourish only if linked to and nourished by accompanying social movements. Whether it is a movement focusing on the environment, civil rights, women's issues, media activism, labor concerns, affordable housing, peace issues, etc., it helps to remember that community media are just the tool—not the ends in itself.

It helps to remember, too, that access facilitators are political agents of social change, helping social movements better utilize the tools of media.

This is harder to keep in mind when focused on the day-to-day activities that keep access operating. The need for “how-to” information that can be applied to immediate problems within the access environment often dictates that we close off thoughts about the bigger picture until a more convenient time—a “later” that often never arrives.

Yet, for survival sake, that “later” should be “sooner.” The burnout that can accompany community media facilitation at times can be assuaged by taking the necessary pause for introspection: basically, who are we? Why do we do what we do? What are the philosophies behind community media, and how are the day-to-day practices supporting these philosophies? What assumptions underlying the philosophies have changed for each of us personally—or for the movement?

The Praxis of Access

To grow, people or organizations need to discuss and question shared values and assumptions—vigorously and regularly—recognizing that expansion will often come from those ideas and beliefs most likely to challenge our own. This is the “praxis” of access: a cycle of practice and reflexivity resulting in changed practices....and evolving values and beliefs regarding the nature of access.

The maturing of the NFLCP/Alliance and the community media movement's basic philosophies, can be traced from the pages of *CTR/CMR* and other publications concerned with grassroots, democratic media. In particular, *CTR/CMR* indicate an evolution from pure idealism and naiveté...to more robust ideologies, grounded in both theory and practice.¹

Over the past two and a half decades, the contents of the *CTR/CMR* were concerned primarily with the techniques of access operation: the “how-to's” of managing the facility, training, negotiating franchise agreements, effectively utilizing volunteers, etc. Organizing and lobbying efforts on behalf of community media were discussed. Often there were references to a widely accepted access notion, such as “an individual right to say what she or he wants.” These notions—the underlying belief system of access, drawing from traditional pluralist assumptions about the nature of power, democracy, and freedom of speech—were rarely probed...until around the late 1980s.

Starting at this time, the NFLCP/Alliance went through a vigorous period of critique, questioning basic access concepts. The reevaluation was reflected through the pages of *CTR* and *CMR*, scholarly publications, and “White Papers” presented at national conferences. Access philosophers such as Bob Devine, Fred Johnson, Patricia Aufderheide, Andrew Blau, Dirk Koning, and DeeDee Halleck, among others, reflected a concern with unproblematic assumptions of early access philosophies, and posed new interpretations regarding the significance of access within a shrinking realm of public discourse. The publications matched periods of attention at national conferences on White Papers—single presentations by long-timers in the access movement addressing philo-

sophical issues in community media. The presentations led to on-going discussions regarding the nature of access and the future direction of community media.²

Some of the concepts and issues explored during this period of reevaluation included fascinating discussions regarding:

- ▲ The shift in First Amendment interpretations away from the individual right of a speaker to the collective right that ideas be voiced and heard;

- ▲ Movement away from the notion of “one person, one vote,” based on unfounded assumptions of equal power in the society; A shift away from the notion of “first come, first served,” based on how this concept helps to maintain existing inequalities of power in society;

- ▲ The importance of access within the concept of the “public sphere” (the realm where people are able to discuss items of public importance);

- ▲ Access is best conceptualized as a process involving community dialog rather than as a product involving polished “TV” programs, mass audiences, or technological toys;

- ▲ The many meanings of “community”—not all of them warm and fuzzy—and how the definitions impact concepts of public access;

- ▲ Media education as a means of “reading” and interpreting the world within notions of power and social change;

- ▲ The impossibility of political “neutrality” on the part of community media and access facilitators (“political” in the framework of power rather than partisan politics);

- ▲ The manner in which training methods are political, in that they force people to view the world through a particular cultural/perceptual “lens;”

- ▲ Attempts by mainstream media to portray “camcorder commandos” as threats to individual privacy.

Cycles of attention to practice and reflexivity and the evolution of basic philosophies are the norm for a maturing organization—or individuals, for that matter. The “how” is helpful in establishing an effective practice; the “why” is necessary in evaluating one’s own practice, making appropriate corrections, and moving forward. Praxis, the connection between practice and reflexivity that sees an on-going interplay between the two, is particularly significant for individuals and organizations engaged in the process of social change.

Modern Global Activism

At the heart of the activist movement that was the nascence of community television channels in the U. was a continuing global grassroots struggle against the concentration of economic and social power, and the consolidation of corporate media power—with its ensuing stranglehold on information. Today there is a resurgence of global activism favoring similar goals of local determination and community empowerment that have been expressed since the early part of the 20th century, and for centuries prior to that. This renewed climate of activism is now giving birth to yet another form of and approach to media activism: the Independent Media Center (IMC) movement.

In November 1999, this renewed global activist movement flexed its collective muscle. Extensive demonstrations against the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle signaled a resurgence of global protest against the concentration of economic and social power. Protests have continued around the world against organizations seen as instrumental in the concen-

tration of global power.

A key element of the movement has been the emergence of local IMCs—to distribute information and bypass the gatekeepers of the mainstream media. IMCs are sprouting up around the world, as evidenced by the growing number of centers listed on the IMC website at www.indymedia.org.

The IMC movement presents a unique mixture of video, audio, print, internet, and satellite mediums. In the US, there are some connections between Indy Media Centers and the cable access movement, but the field is ripe for additional collaborations. The links will not always be easy—at times, access seems out of touch with its activist roots, particularly to youthful social and media activists: institutionalized, entrenched, engaged in bureaucratic politics at the local and national levels...with notions of political “neutrality” that seem incongruous to these constituencies.

The challenges and opportunities provided by a resurgence of activism and additional alternative media channels indicate another growth stage in the access cycle of praxis. Technologies such as the Internet and broadband offer sites of current and future struggle. The opportunity to enlist additional partners in a long-term campaign for social justice and media reform at the global level has expanded.

In the 1930s, Brecht spoke about radio. He could easily have been speaking about the struggle for cable access, or broadband access or Internet access, when he said: “...By continuous, unceasing proposals for the better employment of the apparatus in the interest of the community, we must destroy the social basis of that apparatus and question their use in the interests of the few.”

Access cable television in the US is a part of a wider global movement for social change. We can renew the cycle of praxis by connecting with and celebrating access’s long-standing roots in social activism and by sharing this story of struggle with volunteers, staff, board members, viewers, city officials, and beyond. The story strengthens in the repetition...and the ripples continue to spread back and forth across the globe.

John W. Higgins is an assistant professor in the Media Studies Department of the University of San Francisco. He has been involved in community radio since 1974 and public access since 1981, currently as a member of the board of directors of the San Francisco Community Television Corporation. Email: higginsj@usfca.edu.

NOTES

¹ In the early 1990s, a research project led me repeatedly through every article in all available issues of the CTR/CMR, seeking discussions that would address the philosophical basis of access. Of particular help was the 10th anniversary issue and Susan Bednarczyk’s accounting of the NFLCP history. I am indebted to many people in the NFLCP/ALLIANCE over the years for sharing their visions of community media, starting with my stint as an intern in the national office in 1982. In particular, thanks to Bob Devine and DeeDee Halleck, whose insightful works and valuable feedback have helped me refine my own philosophical perspectives of community media. Thanks, too, to Brenda Dervin of Ohio State University for a broader framework in which to conceptualize the access vision.

² A White Paper session is scheduled for the 2001 Alliance conference in Washington, D.C.

PINK TULLE

An Unlikely Bunch of Revolutionaries

BY NANCY BICKNELL LARKIN

*S*o, I've been procrastinating about this article for weeks. Why on earth did I volunteer? Just because I was there, in the beginning as an Alternate Media Center intern with George Stoney in New York in the mid-70's and because I'm a woman and because this article is supposed to be about the women in those early days etc. Like I need to be reminded how long ago that was?

When we were young. And portable video was young. And women doing technical things was young. And women doing TV was young. And public access was really young, just a baby, really. A baby that was being nurtured through New York University's Alternate Media Center headed by Red Burns and George Stoney. George, a well-known and respected professor at NYU, aided by the remarkable organizational talents of Susan Bednarczyk, was in charge of a nascent group of thirty-six "interns" whose mission was to work with our partnering organization to make public access work. No small task.

So who were we? In a field traditionally dominated by men, there were a disproportionate number of woman interns. Most of us were brought up in the '50's. Our mothers enrolled us in ballet class

(remember the pink tulle tutus?); we took piano or flute, dance class at the women's club. There was no wood shop for us at school, only home economics, which meant learning how to cook and sew. When we watched television, there were no women newscasters, in fact, the most famous woman role model was Donna Reed, she starred in her own show and got full title.

Yes, we lived through the '60's and by the mid-70s, we were in the throes of breaking new ground and not just in television. We were heady with our own invincibility. Still, we were an unlikely bunch of revolutionaries.

There was the fresh, pretty, large eyed beauty queen from the deep Midwest. Straight back, wide smile who came complete with make-up and hair-dryer (you know the kind, with the billowing bonnet attached to the hose that came in a nice round pink carrying case).

There was the serene attractive young woman with the flawless complexion wearing bell-bottom jeans with a decidedly folksy, hippy look that did not belie the intelligence evident in her eyes.

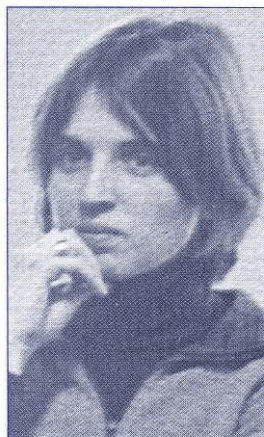
There was the tall, leggy, long-haired blond with elegant posture, who held her head high and looked like a Swedish Goddess. Her team member was a short-

er, squarely solid, almost defiant woman whose eyes blazed at everything, but who had a ringing, infectious belly laugh.

There was the small, dark haired woman from Johnstown, Pennsylvania, who was still smarting over the horrific floods in that town. She looked like Veronica from the Archie comic books (with an acerbic wit). And there was me — still trying to decide who I was anyway, down from the hills of New Hampshire in my best, not too dressy, but what I thought was alternative New York dress (not!).

We all still remain in the communications field in some way, shape or form.

And then there were those who didn't stay. There was the hollow-eyed woman with a mottled complexion, a stern countenance that covered her less than perfect. I remember giving her my coat. She had a heart of gold. She came from the hills of Appalachia and was as different as the man in the moon from the rest of us who were raised in middle class suburban or urban homes. There was exquisite southern beauty with thick long hair, camellia face and that soft drawl. She was an actress with a wild streak working in an access center in (of all places) a church. The pale, sorrowful woman who came from a spate of Ivy covered prep



Circa mid-70s, left to right, Nancy Bicknell, Rika Welsh, Jean Rice, Anne Macintosh and Sue Buske.

and private schools.

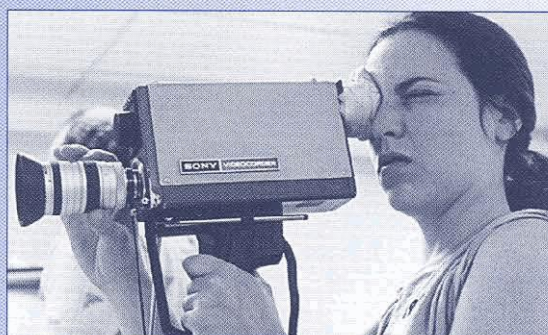
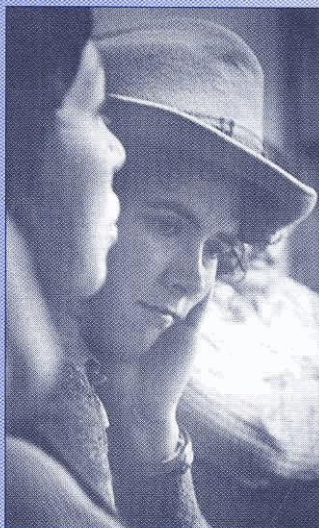
So, as interns, we got a black and white portapak, 96 black and white, reel-to-reel videotapes and a yearly stipend of \$8,600, paid in part by our partner and the Alternate Media Center. We met several times during the year in New York to discuss our projects, show our videos and learn from the master, George Stoney.

We were teamed with different organizations all over the country. Sue Buske was working in with local arts and history programming in Dubuque, Iowa. Jean Rice was working with educational access in Monona, WI, that hotbed of liberalism. Ann McIntosh and her partner, Rika Welsh, were working out of MIT with Italian Americans in Revere, MA. Nancy Jesuale from Johnstown, PA worked with access groups and chronicled the flood. I was thoroughly ensconced in an access center in Dover High, N.H. teaching errant teenagers to release their angst on air. We were all passionate about building community coalitions. We all had our lives changed by the experience. We all continued the work through the NFLCP.

So where are we now? And can you guess who we were? Sue Buske and Jean Rice are both consultants to cities on telecommunications. Ann MacIntosh is still loosely in communications, writing famous books on fly-fishing. Rika Welsh ran an award-winning access center for more than a decade and recently joined the Buske Group as a senior consultant. Nancy Jesuale, last I heard, was working for the city of Los Angeles in the telecommunications office. And I? I've come full circle in local programming and am head of marketing for a regional sports network.

And you know what. Even after 25 years, I think we're all still shredding our tutus.

Nancy Bicknell Larkin is currently vice president of marketing for Fox Sports Net of New England. She was a former Alternate Media Center intern, Public Access Princess (when she worked for Continental Cablevision), Cable Queen (when she graduated to the corporate office), but never Beauty Queen and now she is a Sports Goddess Wanna-be.



Hoke's Spin on the '70s

'The real accomplishment of the founders is that there is a new guard.'

BY DAVID HOKE

*M*y '70s experience with access started in York, PA in 1973-74 as a YMCA outreach worker specializing in "alienated youth." The plan was to attack alienation as the means to reduce gang and race violence as well as drug abuse. It turns out that alienated youth wanted to get un-alienated by extending the "rap sessions" we had at outreach centers to public media. We managed to get a portapac and get some programs on the cable system. Getting access did not come easy—some combination of tenacity and leverage of the YMCA support system worked in the end. Everybody was "alienated," so we thought we should extend the experience to the whole community.

Nobody had any background with media but we managed to get the Alternate Media Center (AMC) to match the support we built in the community. York Community Access Television (YCAT) York, Pennsylvania grew from the YMCA initiative into one of the early broad-based community access centers and continues to this day. In the formative stages of YCAT we had heated debates regarding board composition and culture. The issue was whether the organization would be driven by the individual access users and/or the usual set of interlocking local organizations and bluebloods. The debate threatened formation of the center. With some prompting, the cable operator insisted on balance, board positions were allocated equally to individual and organizational members, and the cable operator was granted the tie breaking vote. This theme continued throughout my experience with the organization.

York Cable TV provided financial and other help even though they resisted the demand for access. They put up cash, donated some equipment and orchestrated resource sharing between York Community College and YCAT.

In the beginning, I used a multifaceted approach in seeking support from the cable operator: 1) argue merits of access principles; 2) point to dedication of volunteers; 3) organize influence of supportive community leaders; and 4) make subtle threats to seek divestiture of the locally owned compa-

ny's full house (cable/UHF/Radio).

To our advantage, Glen Winter, the cable TV manager, had a son about my age and I got the sense that Glen was working through some relationship issues through our talks. In any case, Glen and I spent days arguing about philosophy, politics, economics, technology and even religion—it was great. Glen made all the usual arguments that cable operators make when they resist access.

Directly prior to the close, it seemed like I had dealt with all Glen's objections as they say in sales lingo. But some unspoken objection was holding up the deal. Then it hit me—I was known on the street as "Ponytail." I asked Glen if this was the problem. He said, "Dave, that's the net of it." So I asked, "If I come back tomorrow with a hair cut will you sign?" He said yes and we signed the next day.

Glen did later tell me that their plan was to provide some token support for access, document its failure and then use that documentation to get relief from FCC required access. Their plan backfired—York used access successfully. Anyway, I think that underneath Glen wanted to do the right thing and he did it.

YCAT took on its own life and lots of really great programs came from all sorts of access producers. My own favorites were the ones that related to the original YMCA mission. In one mid-70s' series, public video letters were exchanged between a group of black teenagers living in the projects and the York City police department. A violent clash had just occurred between the groups, and police could not safely enter the projects. The video exchange on access led to resolutions—the police began helping the teenagers with various neighborhood problems and everyone chilled out.

A couple years earlier, York experienced tragic race wars. My grandfather was murdered, as was a white policeman and a completely innocent black woman. A policeman has just (May 2001) been charged in the 1969 murder of the black woman. Suffice it to say the access programs played a very real role in preventing a possible replay of the 1969 tragedies.

YCAT volunteers assumed the task of

cablecasting city council meetings during the mid 70s. Those both met the YCAT mission of promoting citizen's participation in government and at the same time getting city government invested in access. Betty Marshal credited her successful bid for mayor to the access exposure she got while on council. We had a friend.

Of course, once mayor, she was in the hot seat. Her administration was the target of much criticism being expressed on the access channel—the whole thing was working—everyone was using access. However, at that point the mayor started advocating "balanced programming". We all know that a call for balance usually means censorship in the final analysis. However, in classic access form, we said we absolutely do need more balance—the city administration should produce more of its own access programs to offset the negative attacks.

The relationship with the mayor was real tricky. On one hand...If no one is using access to slam the government, we are not doing our job. On the other hand it was apparent that we needed the support of the city to maintain our tenuous deal with the cable operator. At that exact moment we were being squeezed, with bandwidth becoming even more of a problem in those twelve channel days.

As new commercial program opportunities were presented to the operator, room on the twelve channel system for access became a challenge. Access was not a matter of using unused capacity, it was a matter of preempting money makers with access. Actually some of the high profile access shows were getting real Nielsen share, but that's not the right place to hang your hat—it's about expression and purpose not audience. We had a problem, an operator who wanted to take back access time and a mayor who preferred to have less anti-administration programming on access. This is why national access requirements must be in place. Anyway, we did have to make some channel time compromises, but everyone did the right thing and nothing was censored.

Through all that YCAT experience I had the good fortune to participate in the NYU (AMC) cable intern program. George Stoney

kept us all focused on heart, Susan Bednarzyk was the supreme organizer and tour guide of all time, and the exchange among interns and George's guests was incredible. This opportunity just did not exist anywhere else. Insiders wanted to expand the circle and a lot of people outside the circle wanted in.

My spin on the formation of the NFLCP (Alliance for Community Media) goes like this. The real defining point was when the Interns confronted AMC Directors Red Burns and George about the AMC commitment to access. Everyone recognized that AMC was doing great projects like the two-way cable project in Reading and for that matter the cable internship program. But the question was whether AMC was committed to access?

In my mind (and I think others), access was rooted in freedom of speech values and required a political movement. It seemed to me that the AMC was only committed to limited projects, i.e. those that could be funded. AMC did not sign up for the access mission that day. Well, that confrontation was definitely a case of biting the hand that feeds you since much of our paycheck came from AMC. Never the less, we effectively said that access for everyone was at least as important as getting funded for our individual projects.

The frustration with AMC turned to a resolve to build a national grassroots organization ourselves. I am grateful that Red and George did not sign up AMC—we would have failed the access mission. Effective political movements can only come from the grass roots and AMC was ultimately an academic institution. We need academic institutions, but not at the center of a political movement. Academic intuitions make great members.

The internship program did present a great opportunity for the grassroots organization of a national movement. Interns were located in each region of the US. Likewise, the internship workshop cycle gave the regional organizers a paid ticket to get together. So now we were in transition from being dependent on project sponsors to being a true grass-roots organization.

George Stoney, the father of access, must have been so happy to see this happen. I do not know whether it is just his nature or by design, but my spin is that George has been so important because of his ability to nurture others so they can act on their own.

The transition to a national grassroots

organization didn't come easy. As the organization began to grow, the founders and initial organizers hit some snags. I recall some real knock down drag out fights that led to "70s" style sensitivity sessions. The differences were resolved because everyone shared a deep common commitment to the basic principles of access. This is all about freedom of speech and democracy.

It was a great experience to be there in the beginning. I recall one of our early mid-Atlantic conferences where we all brought sleeping bags and camped out in a school room. Nobody had a budget—when it's right, you just do it. I have not been involved for a number of years, but it was gratifying to hear Rika say come down to Washington, DC and meet the new guard as well as catch up with the old guard. The real accomplishment of the founders is that there is a new guard.

I can recall Mike Aronson driving from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania to then stay up all night in a 24 hour diner preparing for the next day FCC lobby blitz in DC (regarding Midwest Video). I think we hit every commissioner office and then some. The guy at the snack bar got the pitch. At one point we were tearing down a hall, looked at each other and broke up laughing when we realized we had no idea which building we were in or where our next stop was. Because York, PA is close to DC I made a number of those trips. The thing I learned on those trips to DC and the York experience is that grass-roots movements do work, and all you have to do is be yourself and get everyone to stand up and be counted.

YCAT is still alive and well today. Having been away for years, I don't know all the details. However, while back in York for a family visit, a new acquaintance unaware of my history with access told me about this great thing called Access. She was sure that I would want to get involved.

David Hoke was a co-founder of the NFLCP and York Community Access TV and well as being an AMC Intern. He has completed various independent video projects and worked on cable franchise initiatives for MSOs. His interest in cable data led to work setting up computer systems for retailers in the '80s, then voice and data systems for Turtle Beach Systems. More recently he has focused on Internet projects and is currently setting up global Internet phone services. He can be contacted at davidh@publicinternetcorp.com.



In the 70s.



NFLCP NEWSLETTER, APRIL/MAY 1978

NFLCP Appears Before the FCC

On November 15, a group of NFLCP people from the Mid-Atlantic regional appeared before the FCC at its monthly en banc meeting. They introduced the commissioners to the Federation and screened a short video sampler of access programming. David Hoke (York Community Access TV) reports that the Commission seemed genuinely interested in the access movement, its problems, and the number of people involved in making community TV, although they did ask if they were all 'practicing for jobs in broadcasting?'

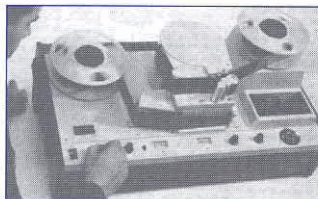
In a written statement, the NFLCP delegation asked the FCC to reassert its commitment to access by recognizing that: Non-operator use of CATV channels is a public right. Such programming serves the public interest of the community as well as benefiting the cable operator. A significant amount of access programming is occurring today, and that this indicates a genuine public interest and need for access.

The statement also urged the FCC: To allow municipalities to negotiate their own access requirements To clarify or eliminate such terms as 'reasonable rate,' and to adhere to the deadlines set for grand-fathered systems to provide access channels.

— NFLCP New England Newsletter, 1976

The Way It Was...An Access Pioneer

BY RANDY VANDALSEN



1963 (EARLY "PORTABLE" VTR)

Ampex VR-660 — Although it was one of the first VTRs to weigh under 100 pounds, this unit didn't fire the imaginations of the cable access pioneers. (Check out the loopy path through which this deck's expensive 2" tape had to be threaded!) But changes in video technology were just around the corner....



1967 (THE "VIDEO ROVER")

Sony DV-2400 — The first "portapack". Portable (about 25-30 pounds), b/w, 1/2" reel-to-reel tape, record ONLY. Hand crank was used to rewind the tape (really!).

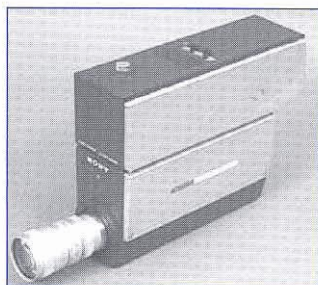


1969 ("VIDEO ROVER 2")

Sony AV-3400 (portable b/w, 1/2" reel-to-reel VTR/camera. The most common portapak at early access centers.

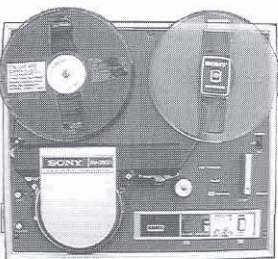
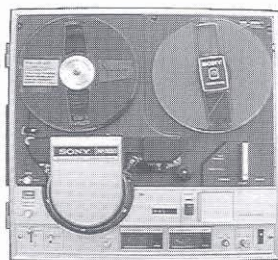
MID '70s (SONY AVC-3450)

This sleeker b/w camera replaced the boxy, heavier one. The most common portapak used with the 3400 portapak at early access centers.



EARLY B/W STUDIO CAMERA (SONY CVC-2100)

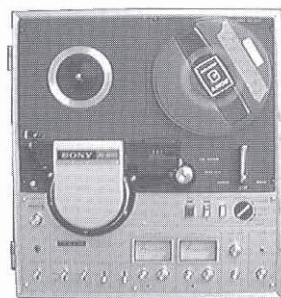
Introduced in the mid-60s, often used 5-10 years later as a b/w studio camera in early access centers. No intercom, lens zoom & focus was controlled by hand, detachable viewfinder. Separate AC power and camera cables required.



EARLY '70s (SONY AV-3600/3650)

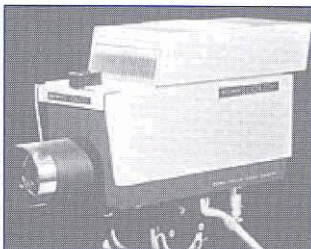
First b/w 1/2" reel-to-reel "editing" system. Start and end points of each segment were cued, backed up about six sec-

onds (by hand!), the VCRs were started together, and a cut-only edit was made about six seconds later — hopefully near the desired point. Before this awkward technique was introduced, access videos were usually edited "in-camera" (program segments were shot with a portapak in the order that they appeared in the final product). These VTRs were also used to make studio recordings up to one hour in length.



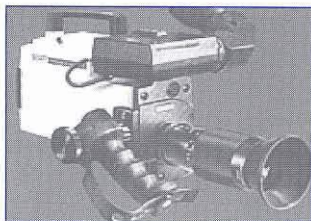
MID '70s (SONY AV-8600/8650)

Color, 1/2" reel-to-reel version of the 3600/3650 manual editing system.



MID '70s (SONY DXC-5000)

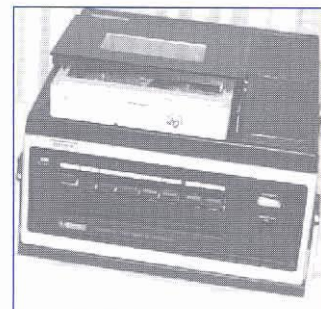
Color cameras like this big box began to replace the b/w cameras in access studios. A rod went through the camera head that was pushed/pulled to zoom in/out and rotated to focus.



LATE '70s (SONY DXC-1610)

An early portable color camera,

designed to look like a 16mm film camera. Most that followed looked like this too. Large by today's standards, but it wasn't a camcorder. It could also be configured for studio use.



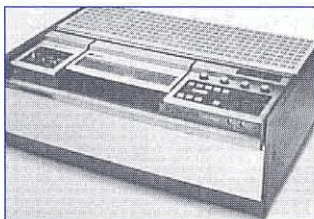
LATE '70s (SONY VO-3800) LATE '70s (SONY SLO-340)

These early portable color videocassette recorders succeeded the first generation of portapacks. New generations of access producers would never know the exquisite joy of carefully threading videotape by hand through a much too complex VTR tape path. The heavier VO-3800 was a "U-Matic" 3/4" videocassette recorder (a format introduced in the early-70s). The SLO-340 used the first widely-used consumer format — "Betamax" — which was introduced in 1975. Many access centers upgraded their b/w, 1/2" reel-to-reel equipment to Betamax, because its lighter weight and lower cost made it more practical and affordable, although the 3/4" gear yielded higher picture quality. Each of these VCRs required a separate portable camera (like the AVC-3450 or the DXC-1610) to be connected to it to produce a field recording.

Looks Back

MID '70s (SONY VO-2800)

An important advance was the replacement of mechanical with electronic controls. Easy, accurate editing was possible by connecting a VO-2800 to a VO-2850. All you had to do was cue up the start and end points of each video segment, push a button, and sit back and watch these U-Matic 3/4" videocassette decks perform "frame accurate" edits

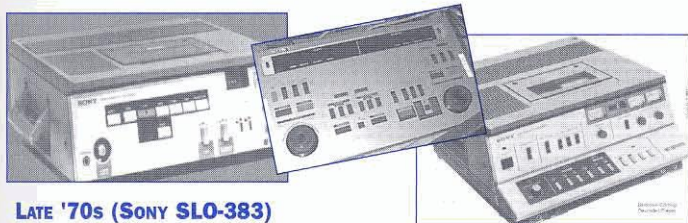


(±2-3 frames), in either an assemble or insert mode. However, the top-loading design of the 2000 series didn't last very long.



LATE '70s (SONY VO-5800/RM-400/VO-5850)

The front-loading Sony VO-5000 series of electronic editing equipment became a common and important part of an access center's inventory during the late 1970s and early '80s. Sadly, many of these "Type 5" U-Matic 3/4" systems are still being pressed into service today, typically at underused or poorly funded access centers.



LATE '70s (SONY SLO-383)

Betamax tried to keep up with the latest designs, too. A Betamax electronic editing system (with this SLO-383 editing deck) had features similar to those of the 3/4" U-Matic package, and was often seen at access centers. But the industrial/professional line of the Betamax ended here. After the VHS format took control of the consumer market, the industrial/professional field eventually followed.

Randy VanDalsen started one of the nation's first cable TV Public Access operations in East Lansing, Michigan (1972-1980). He was a member of the Alliance (then NFLCP) staff in Washington, DC (1983-1985) until becoming the initial executive director for Access Sacramento (1985-1991). VanDalsen has been a consultant with The Buske Group since 1992.



Community Media a Life-long Experience

BY ANN MACINTOSH

There are three important life-altering changes in my life: dropping out of Vassar College and graduating from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor; founding the off-off-Broadway theatre known as the Loft Theatre Workshop in New York in 1965; and the last one: moving into community video as an intern as part of the Alternate Media Project.

That experience has informed much of what I've done since. I made some good videos (primarily with Rika Welsh), filmed important sequences of Jean Rouch, the French ethnographic filmmaker, fundraised for arts organizations, and, most recently, worked with Trout Unlimited to preserve the trout I now fish for and write to conserve. I've written two books about trout, edited many newsletters, the model for which is always the first NFLCP one with Rika Welsh and Mike Aronson.

Every time I begin to get involved in a new project, my community media experience seems to be the impetus. Last weekend, I was fishing near Hancock, NY, on the Delaware River. Many barriers to good protection for the trout exist there. I promised some free advice to a new non-profit, formed to help save the river.

I met a non-angling couple at dinner in a restaurant. They said that hardly anyone in the community even knows the fishermen are there, let alone how important they are to the economy of the local community. They questioned their willingness to get involved. The couple said they figured they should care about the fishermen and the trout, but weren't certain why.

In an instant, I was off and spouting about how to build a community coalition, the importance of all stakeholders working together, etc. — all the words from the NFLCP training, from the days of George Stoney, and from the intern program just came tumbling 'cross my tongue!

Ann McIntosh now works and lives in the country near Baltimore, Maryland and is a fundraiser for nonprofit arts organizations. She fishes and writes about it at every opportunity.



Paper Tiger grew out of *Communications Update*, a public access series on Manhattan Cable that was founded by Liza Bear and Michael McClard. In those days there were no public studios for access: there were only the dedicated channels and an office where we would bring our tapes each week. But a private entrepreneur, Jim Chaldek, had rented space in the building next door to the head end. He ran a cable out his roof and into the Manhattan Cable offices to enable his studios to broadcast live programs.

Herb Schiller was in New York, teaching at Hunter College, and agreed to do a series on the *New York Times*. The group that gathered to make the series—Pennee Bender, Marty Lucas, Diana Agosta, Daniel Brooks and me—had so much fun doing it that we decided to create our own series of live “readings,” critical analyses of various media publications. Since that time we have made almost 400 programs, and Paper Tiger has been on weekly in the New York area since that first series in 1981.

In the 1980s many of the public access programs were pathetic attempts to imitate network TV. There was either a fake newsroom look, or the Johnny Carson wannabe set of a couch and a few plants. We tried to make Paper Tiger in a style that was appropriate to low budget, down and dirty instant TV: we used painted backdrops and hand letter graphic cards (the character generator at Chaldek’s studio never worked!) and had Herb sit on a yellow kitchen chair, rather than a pompous director’s chair or a fluffy sofa. We showed the seams: miked some of the camera cues, and had a process cut-away that showed the other camera person taking aim at the subject. We wanted to show other access producers that they could be funky and at the same time use highly knowledgeable guests in a simple but interesting format.

The programs were very popular and many other access centers asked for copies. We were swamped with requests and started looking into satellite distribution. (3/4” tapes are heavy and ran up the postage bills!) We received an invitation of David Madsen, who was the director of the Boston Film and Video Foundation. He had seen an installation we had done at the Whitney Museum. He asked us if we wanted to do an installation in Boston. We were tired of installations and asked how they would like an installation in the sky? He loved the idea and so we received an initial grant and founded Deep Dish TV. Rather than limit ourselves to Paper Tiger programs, we gathered material from other access centers around the country, compiled them into thematic shows and leased a national satellite. The first themes included racism, youth, peace, women, etc. Different coordinators collated each program into a 58 minute compilation. We set to work for many weeks trying to contact all the centers to let them know the programs were coming. Over 150 stations down-linked the first series and asked for more. Martha Wallner, Caryn Rogoff and Daniel Brooks coordinated a big national meeting to elect a board of directors more representative of the broad community than just Paper Tiger folks and make plans for future series.

Paper Tiger now is coordinating youth training workshops and still producing a weekly program. Deep Dish is now distrib-

Paper Tiger & Deep Dish

A BRIEF HISTORY

by DeeDee Halleck

uted on Free Speech satellite network. Future projects include making a daily news program. Both Deep Dish and Paper Tiger distribute their tapes to schools and universities to help sustain the offices.

From the beginning, both Paper Tiger and Deep Dish have worked closely with NFLCP and Alliance. A substantial part of both budgets have been tee shirt sales at the annual meetings. (At Deep Dish we used to say that we were

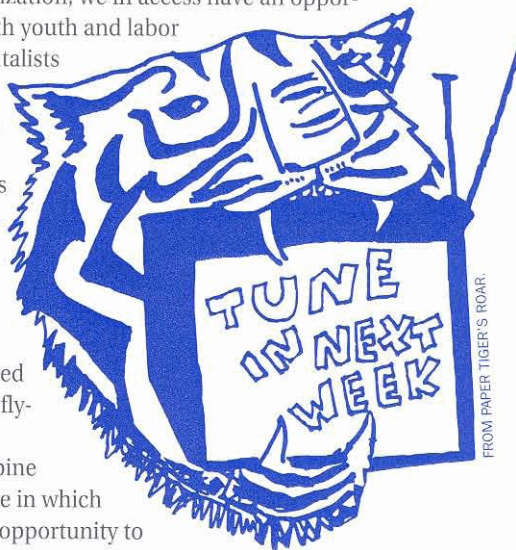
the only television network that ran on tee shirt sales!) We have had other products for Alliance conferences such as Daniel Brooks’ famous Deep Dish boxer shorts and Mary Feaster’s satellite earrings. The people at the Alliance have always been our core community and our target market (to speak in cable biz language) in more ways than one.

For years, the Alliance for Community Media has been the fortress of resistance to the information monopolies and has been the nourishing center of new media visions. This hasn’t been easy and we have twenty five years of battle scars from the cable wars to prove it. But we also have years of steadfast concentration on our goal: an authentic democracy of communication.

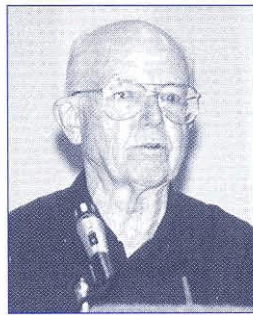
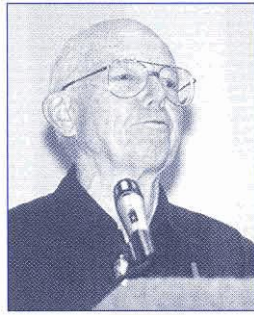
Recently, the Independent Media Center movement, which grew out of groups like Paper Tiger, Deep Dish, Speak Easy, Free Speech TV, Changing America, Whispered Media, and many other video and radio collectives, has flourished around the world since its appearance in Seattle. This movement has shown everyone how powerful it can be when videographers, radio producers, computer techs, writers and photographers join together to collaborate. The IMCs (which now exist in 59 cities around the world) can learn much from the access movement, and we have much to learn from them. With the growing movement against corporate globalization, we in access have an opportunity to join with youth and labor and environmentalists who are determined to forge a new destiny beyond the malls and sweatshops, beyond the polluted rivers and strip-mined lands, beyond genetic engineered crops and butterfly-killer corn rows.

We can combine forces for a future in which people have the opportunity to speak (and web publish and email) to their communities. We will work together for justice and equality: teamsters, turtles, hackers, and tigers, the Alliance drums providing the steady beat.

DeeDee Halleck is a media activist and co-founder of Paper Tiger and Deep Dish. Her new book, *Hand Held Visions* (Fordham University Press), will be published this summer



FROM PAPER TIGER'S ROAR.



THE ESSENTIAL GEORGE STONEY

Editor's note: When I started to put together this 25th Anniversary edition of CMR, I contacted George in Ireland for his thoughts on what the issues of concern might be at this point in our evolution. He wrote back to me with seven clear and important areas that were most pressing from his perspective. And they are:

First, the 'first come, first served non-discriminatory assignment of time and facilities' needs to be examined in light of our quarter of a century.

As early as 1972, when Red Burns and I worked with Nicholas Johnson, the lone "green" member of the FCC, to craft the language for the provision of access in cable franchises, the concept of "first come, first served" was fundamental to ensuring that all users would be treated equally. We were also borrowing from the experience of the "Challenge for Change" program with the Canadian National Film Board, where I had been guest executive for the years 1968-70. With advice from Brian Owen, at the Cable Television Association, we designed the first access apprentice project that was to begin in 1973. Now, almost three decades later, we have a wealth of experience to help us to reconsider the challenges and shortcomings in implementing this concept. On the whole, "first come, first served" has been a strong bedrock from which to build policies, but there have been problems. Perhaps the most troubling has been the amount of resources in time, training expense and millions of hours of channel space that have been carelessly utilized by thoughtless self-indulgence users—behaving a bit like naughty kids in the back of the room, wasting everyone else's time who are there to get an education.

Yes, "first come, first served" is as fundamental to Access as "one person, one vote" is in our concept of democracy. Yet no one would accuse me of interfering with a neighbor's democratic rights if I tried to persuade him/her to use the vote more responsibly, or even vote for my party. They can ignore me, but I may also have the power to change their minds.

But the question arises, what happens when this "power to persuade" rests in the hand of access managers whose job it is to implement the policies that determine time slots and equipment allocations. There's the rub. Compare us with the public librarians or the people setting curriculum for our public schools. They continually make choices. They do so according to what they think is for the "good of the community." Yes, they listen to majority voices, and also to the minority. They assume the burden of leadership. Thirty-odd years of experience have indicated that we must take similar responsibility and chances. We also need to assume a role of leadership, making the necessary choices for the "good of the com-

munity," while leaving considerable open space for all to participate, even for the people whom we think irresponsible.

Second, we need to redefine what we mean today by "community."

Originally "community" was limited to the territory covered by the individual franchise, and included only those who subscribed to cable, generally a relatively small percentage of the inhabitants. Right from the beginning we were all dissatisfied with this limitation. We strove to use this window of opportunity, which Nick Johnson had helped us define, to train people and to use equipment to make tapes that could be shared with a wider group. We "bicycled" tapes from franchise to franchise. We had community screenings. We became aware, quite early, that just as important as serving that immediate community, many producers wanted to reach out to another "community of interest" and a wider audience with the issues they were exploring. The anti-Vietnam War groups, the ecology groups, and church congregational groups had an interest in sharing their ideas and reaching right across the country. In the early '80s DeeDee Halleck and the Paper Tiger collective found ways to use satellite connections to make this possible. A much larger definition of "community" was born.

Meanwhile some of our more technically accomplished leaders and pioneers (Dirk Koning in Grand Rapids, Anthony Riddle in Manhattan, Drew Shaffer in Iowa City, Sean McLaughlin on Maui, and many others) have gone boldly forth, God bless them, and further expanded our distribution territory by cablecasting (streaming) onto the web. This is taking us to the full actuation of the "simultaneously local and global" potential of the new technologies.

With this expansion of distribution capabilities and therefore the "communities" we serve, the question arises about the allocation of resources on the local level. Many access centers have rules that prohibit use by anyone not a resident of the immediate franchise area. Perhaps some attention needs to be given to these policy limitations in light of our need to remain a meaningful resource to the larger movement for media democracy.

Third, and perhaps most difficult, we need to find strategies to deal with conflicts arising from the use of time and facilities by individuals with entrepreneurial intent.

Here I may be overly influenced by my close observation of Access as it has developed in Manhattan. Some egregious situations are easily spotted: the psychics who give their phone numbers and, after the live show is over, charge callers for advice. A popular talk show host who took equipment to New Jersey to visit his auto dealer and had him on camera explicitly peddling his stock? Executive

A Walk with George

BY MIKE ARONSON

In 1976, I was blissfully under-employed in Somerville, Massachusetts doing non-commercial community radio, cable TV, and making stained glass windows. The war was over, Steve Herrell had just opened his first homemade ice cream shop in town, and I had my own low power FM station to play with...the perfect life! Then a friend brought me these papers and said, "Why don't you apply for this great National Endowment for the Arts matching grant?" I was skeptical that anything government related like the NEA would really want to fund public access. But I figured something with a name like the Alternate Media Center in New York just might.

At that point in my life, I hadn't even realized that "access" was a thing in and of itself. When I got to New York that July, I was astounded to meet the most amazing group of individuals...all doing access of one sort or another all over the country. Plus these people were a lot of fun!

I remember meeting my next mentor, George Stoney. To that point in my life I had not met one as dedicated to social change and as skillful in communication arts as George. That year he taught me that even 'grown-ups' can continue to believe in, and act on, their ideals.

My fondest George memory of all however, involves our trip the summer of 1976 to the Telluride Video Festival in Colorado. Telluride is a beautiful town located in a bowl surrounded on three sides by massive mountains. Since we were to be there for three days, George decided we should climb a different one each morning. I thought that was a great idea and looked forward to our morning constitutional strolls up in the hills. Well, I clearly did not know George too well at that point. When he said "climb a different one each morning" he meant CLIMB!!! To make a long story short, I spent the better part of those three mornings struggling to keep up with George as he motored up and down those mountains. That weekend George taught me a lot about access and even more about myself!

Mike Aronson became a gynecologist and is currently affiliated with the Tufts New England Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. email: mparonson@aol.com



Still trying to catch up with George - Arizona Desert July 2000.

Director Anthony Riddle with the MNN non-commercial policies in hand, had a clear mandate to suspend him for a year.

But rigidly strict observance of the non-commercial policies to the point of being anti-entrepreneurial might have eliminated some of my favorite shows. For example, what about the literary talk show who interviews authors and professors about their new books? Surely the guest is "peddling his wares," even advertising the reputation of his university. The publisher is getting for free what they pay a fortune for every Sunday to advertise in the *New York Times*. Or, what about a woman who has a show on genealogy? Her business is helping people trace their family connection. I have learned a lot listening to her. I know this is her profession, she is building her clientele of private clients, who will be paying her a fee. Is this advertising or helpful and thought provoking information?

Yet another example is a show called *Birth Balance*, a continually intriguing weekly program about midwifery, natural childbirth, and water birthing? It often shows graphic, and quite beautiful and explicit scenes of birth. I don't think we have had a single complaint about its content. But I know the woman who makes the program also sells the tapes. She is in the hire of professional groups, advocating her practices. Should we be eliminating her? Again is it commercial or informational?

A harder call: some teenagers from Harlem have a weekly fashion show. Shop owners and designers are frequent guests. They don't put up the addresses of their stores or their phone numbers. Viewers are familiar with them from the neighborhoods. It is a very positive show for all. But people are financially involved. Would we discover that the producers are charging guests for the chance to present their wares, or are receiving gifts in exchange? Anthony would be within his rights to interfere. But should he?

And finally, what about the PR firms and consultants for national non-profits organizations, like the Heart Association, or the YW and YMCAs, who are providing fundraising materials to the locally based chapter of their organizations. They may suggest the addition of original material at the local level, but most of the time the locally based chapter or non-profit lack the time, training and staff to do this. Those PR advisors are making money. The local organization is getting free fundraising outreach, using the community's channels. Is there a conflict?

I have raised many of the questions, I wish I had some answers. I do feel it is important for us to address these quandaries in a consistent fashion. There is a need to have discussion about the implications from which we can develop a clear set of guidelines to support those in the field who face these difficult decisions, often without the experience to fully understanding the consequence of their solutions. We can assist them, and should—based on our thirty years of experience. Let's use it.

Fourth, we need to redefine and reconsider "volunteerism," drawing on our long experience over time, what can be accomplished by unpaid community members and what needs to be facilitated by paid staff.

In the early days of the '70s, we were all fired up with wonderful ideals about community. I can still feel the thrill, and it makes me nostalgic. But looking at it more soberly, now thirty years later, I realize that every movement eventually fails unless quite early on there is continuity, and this usually means a small cadre of paid people. Churches have realized this. None would have survived without paid staff. Libraries were started and run for many years by volunteers, but those that survived had to eventually ask for

and get community financial support.

Thanks to our beginning when, even the early NYU cable access interns were receiving small fees, we have understood the need for paid staff. Some local access efforts lived for a time on nothing but volunteer effort. Inevitably, however, people's lives changed, their priorities changed. Had there not been some staff continuity, each time the supporters dropped out, someone would have had to start all over again. The challenge is to keep things in balance, and the question we face most often now is 'when should staff people be involved in production?' If we play "hands off" and newly trained volunteers are left on their own, only the technically adept survive. Often people with the greatest need to speak get lost.

Experience has guided a lot of access managers to find sensible compromises. But dare we draw up rules? Don't local differences call for different solutions? How can we find flexibility yet remain effective to the obligation that our commitments in the cable franchise call for? I have observed literally dozens of access coordinators with experience who have found their own good directions. But again, we need to provide consistent guidelines. The NFLCP, and later the Alliance, has had an important role to play here. It *must* continue to create the forum where discussion about the implications of such policies is encouraged, and the best solutions are examined. This is an ever-changing challenge of what we do for and with our communities. The dangers of not fully understanding the long term ramifications of these decisions have proven to be very damaging in many communities over the years.

We have been extraordinarily fortunate that so many experienced access professional have been willing to remain in their communities, become rooted members of it, have families on very low pay, and are still with us. We should celebrate them more often. We really need to listen to their leadership on these issues.

Fifth, we need to reconsider our mission in light of the developments around new technology like the Internet.

More and more of us are thinking of our organizations as at the hub of community communication, however broadly this may be defined. A lot of access centers today look very different from ones we have known in the past. Some models, like the wonderful Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, have designed facilities to serve community radio, have computer labs and mobile training vans, as well as live screenings and concerts that may, only incidentally, have a connection with what is seen in the channels. Brooklyn Public Access, like many access facilities now, has a training center to teach people how to design their own websites or job skill training for which they charge a pittance compared to what private schools charge. More need to do this, but it can't happen without thought being given to sources of financial support other than (or in addition to) franchise fees. This leads to:

Sixth, we need to find ways to encourage a wider community support for our access centers as valuable community resources akin to the status of public libraries.

In all too many places we have depended so largely on the cable franchise fees that we haven't had to think beyond, to other ways our organizations can build upon this base of operational support. The boards of directors in our centers need to accept their role in the long term financial planning for their organization.

Expansion of funding through grants is not the solution. It is important to realize that grants come with additional project commitments often adding to the scope of work to be accomplished within the existing staffing of a center. Grants, while an important way to add to scope of services a center may provide to the community, are most effective when they create collaborations between community institutions. They can successfully embellish the role of the access center as a catalyst to bring people together and to expand the ways in which media and technology can be used in support of collaborative efforts, be it in schools or in government or for the improvement of community.

I hate to beg. I hate the whole process of grant writing, of courting the representatives of foundations. But it is a necessary part of grant writing. Fundraising through grants, in my experience, can't be left to the professionals, however skilled they may be as grant writ-

...the stronger the role of the access center within the community, the more it is valued through the outcomes it creates for the city and its residents, the harder it will be for it to disappear. New Bush appointments to the FCC and the Supreme Court are shadowing our future. We've got to begin making changes.

ers. I don't think we have ever received substantial funding without personal connections. This means the allocation (investment) of resources (staff) to accomplish any meaningful financial growth. Ultimately, of course, we may lose our long cherished claims on the cable companies. But the stronger the role of the access center within the community, the more it is valued through the outcomes it creates for the city and its residents, the harder it will be for it to disappear. New Bush appointments to the FCC and the Supreme Court are shadowing our future. We've got to begin making changes.

Seventh, we need to develop one or more centers for staff training which would also be a place where the concepts and ideals of access could be fostered, debated, nurtured and referenced in archives. Leadership development is the key concept.

Back in the early 1970s, NYU Alternate Media Center was doing exactly this. Co-founder Red Burns worked with me with full-hearted support for four years. Then she was wise enough to know that NYU's costs were too high to be of service to most people. She saw a mission for the Alternate Media Center in the fast developing technologies and mastered their intricacies herself. With massive support from industry (and they have certainly profited from the training opportunities themselves), she has made the Interactive Telecommunications center one of NYU's "crown jewels" and has been much honored herself in the process. But our little band of cable access pioneers were left adrift.

Around the country efforts were being made to fill the gap. Over the years NFLCP/Alliance members have emerged with skills as trainers and have set up some interesting courses and training initiatives, but we still lack places with a solid base of funding to meet this need.

I think we need leadership development with dialogue about the long-term direction and the establishment of planning guidelines for centers.

I hope this will happen soon.

Certainly we need to "spread the gospel" (my background and habits of thought shape my words long after the faith has vanished). If we are loyal to one another and our almost foolhardy utopian dream, I believe we will survive and do well. ■

Annual Alliance Awards Honor Leaders

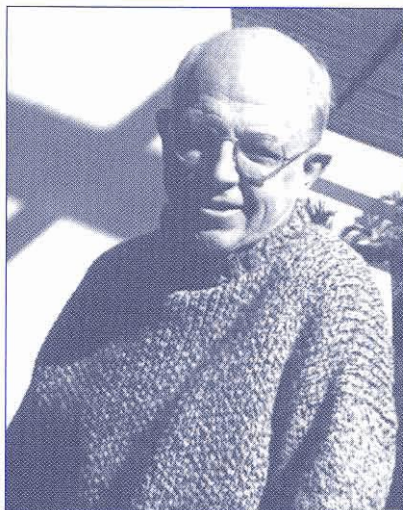
GEORGE STONEY AWARD FOR HUMANISTIC COMMUNICATION

George Stoney, The Paulette Goddard Professor in film at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, is a documentary filmmaker, community activist, and video pioneer perhaps best known as the father of public access.

Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, George began his filmmaking career in 1946 after working in journalism. He has produced, written and directed more than fifty films, television series and videotapes, most of them documentaries exploring social problems and solutions.

His time as guest executive director of the Challenge for Change program with the Canadian Film Board (1968-1970), was a seminal experience, from which George would draw direction over the rest of his long career in community activism and social change through the use of media.

George left Canada to join New York University's Undergraduate Film and Television Department in 1971, where he became chair of the department one year later. His course, "The Documentary Workshop," has been offered at NYU for the past thirty years. During those early years, George co-founded with Red Burns the Alternate Media Center, which trained many of the early activists at cable television's community access channels. From this group in 1976, the National Federation of Local Cable



Programmers was formed, today the Alliance for Community Media.

Usually awards established in the name of a distinguished colleague are done when the honoree is deceased. Fortunately for us, this is not the case with the *George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication*. Established in 1979, the award honors a group or individuals that through their work improve the quality of life around in their communities through the use of media.

George has been a leader by example and design. He is not afraid to bear his heart, soul and dreams on his plaid sleeve. That openness is contagious. He has stayed steadfast throughout his long career to the philosophy and mission of the NFLCP/Alliance. Never

has George become a slave to the latest gadget or trend to hit the media market. He is and has always been about the message.

The tools available to him over his lifetime have shifted from reel-to-reel audio and 16mm film to 35mm film to 1/2" B&W reel-to-reel video to VHS to DV cam. Frankly, that has been immaterial. His messages transcend the tech du jour. He focuses on people and their conditions, with the intent to improve both. One has only to peruse the list of his film credits to discover his deep social conscious.

What good fortune we all have to travel a part of the same path with George Stoney. May we too stay focused on what truly matters!

—Dirk Koning

BUSKE AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP

Sue Buske, born in Warren, Illinois and a music teacher by profession, was first introduced to cable television in Dubuque, Iowa, where she began an educational series for the Area 8 Instructional Media Center in 1973. Thinking that Dubuque could benefit from greater cable coverage for its active cultural scene, she applied and was accepted to the National Endowment of the Arts Cable TV Internship Program run by George Stoney at the Alternate Media Center in New York. She discovered how others around the country were utilizing public access channels, and her life's work was forever changed.

In 1977, Sue moved to Ohio to head up the Miami Valley Cable TV Council where she worked with Continental Cablevision and several municipalities to coordinate cooperative access programming development. As a result of the innovative nature of this cable consortium, Sue Buske became a national leader in the community media movement.

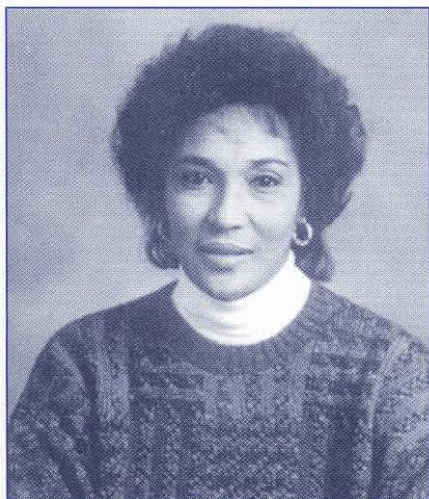
Washington DC, and the National Cable TV Information Center, was her next stop, where in 1978 she concurrently took on being the first executive director of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers—an unpaid position for the first years. Sue remained at the organization's helm for almost a decade, shaping and leading the organization through its infancy into becoming the pivotal base of support for the access movement of today. Established in 1987, the Buske Award for Leadership is given each year to someone who furthers these principles of dedication within the Alliance for Community Media.

Sue is recognized for her honest, no-nonsense, down-to-earth approach to local empowerment. Like George, she has the energy, focus and commitment unequalled in our field. She has dedicated her life to the growth of sound community involvement in the decision making process around cable television franchise decisions, which lead to the development of well-positioned local resources for community uses of media and technology.



In 1980, as the first recipient of the George Stoney Award, it was said ... "if you are seeking the latest information on franchising, public access and local origination ... Call Sue Buske" and many people felt the phrase would be in use for a long time to come—well twenty-some years later, they were right!

—Rika Welsh



**JEWELL RYAN-WHITE AWARD
FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

"Traveling life's road, we learn and grow. It's each experience along the way that gives our lives meaning and dimension. There are no isolated incidents — each event is an important part of the chronology of teachings that helps strengthen us to reach higher ground.

"The Alliance is without a doubt the 'Premiere' catalyst for progressive change and leadership in community media, political action and social change.

"*The Jewell Ryan-White Cultural Diversity Award*, created in 1993 about the time we changed from the National Federation of Cable Programmers, recognizes outstanding contributions to processes that promote culturally diverse and community involvement in the field of community media.

"My aim has always been to foster the spirit of inclusion of African Americans, the developmentally challenged, gay, lesbian, along with numerous other hard to reach groups of people, into the decision-making process of our organization. The Jewell Ryan-White Cultural Diversity award not only demonstrates the Alliance's strong commitment to diversity, global respect for humanity, but the Award, given annually, heralds the accomplishments of African Americans and other men and women who have significantly enhanced the quality of life for all Americans.

"I salute The Alliance on its 25th Anniversary. To be included in the 25th year anniversary celebration is first and foremost an honor."

—Jewell Ryan-White

AWARDS

George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications

- 1979 *George Stoney*
- 1980 *Sue Miller Buske*
- 1981 *Jean Rice*
- 1982 *Tom Borrup*
- 1983 *Diana Peck*
- 1984 *Roxie Cole*
- 1985 *Nicholas Johnson*
- 1986 *Eugene Shirk, Mayor Reading, PA*
- 1987 *Everett Parker*
- 1988 *Michael Meyerson*
- 1989 *Alternative Views - Austin, Texas*
- 1990 *The Benton Foundation*
- 1991 *Dee Dee Halleck*
- 1992 *Herb Schiller*
- 1993 *Joe van Eaton and Bob Devine*
- 1994 *Alan Dachman*
- 1995 *Tremeleau County Cable Commission*
- 1996 *Shea & Gardner Attorneys at Law*
- 1997 *Erik Barnouw*
- 1998 *Tony Riddle and Paula Manley*
- 1999 *Sheriff B. J. Barnes, Greensboro, North Carolina*
- 2000 *Dirk Koning*
- 2001 *City of Brunswick and Brunswick Hills Township, [OH]*

Buske Leadership Award

- 1987 *Sue Miller Buske*
- 1988 *Jan Leshner (Ireland)*
- 1989 *Dirk Koning*
- 1990 *Chuck Sherwood*
- 1991 *Gerry Field*
- 1992 *Sharon Ingraham*
- 1993 *Lynn Carillo Cruz*
- 1994 *Andrew Blau*
- 1995 *Hubert Jessup*
- 1996 *Rika Welsh*
- 1997 *Carl Kucharski*
- 1998 *Steven Fortriede*
- 1999 *Deb Vinsel*
- 2000 *Alan Bushong*
- 2001 *John Donovan*

Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity

- 1994 *Curtis Henderson*
- 1995 *Margie Johnson Reese*
- 1996 *Rick Maultra*
- 1997 *Fernando Moreno*
- 1998 *CeCe Pinheiro*
- 1999 *Richard Turner*
- 2000 *Ben and Sue Charles, Native Media (Tacoma, WA)*
- 2001 *Azaka Ajanaku*

Hometown USA

A VIDEO FESTIVAL UNLIKE ANY OTHER!

BY ANNE D'URSO-ROSE

In 1978, a national video festival was launched by the NFLCP that generated 20 entries, of which nearly fifty percent were honored as "winners." Twenty-three years later, the *Hometown USA Video Festival* receives thousands of entries each year and is cable TV's largest video competition. The festival is an annual celebration of the accomplishments of community access producers and centers across the country. The programs that are produced at community access centers are the tangible "products" of those accomplishments. But along with being a showcase for these programs, the *Hometown USA Festival* is a process that, in-and-of-itself, builds community through the use of media and technology.

Consider the process. Entries received from every region of the country are judged at dozens of access centers in small towns and cities across the US. A "jury" comprised of an access producer, a staff person, and a member from the community-at-large gather together to view and evaluate entries. Winners are not based solely on aesthetic and technical quality. Judging sheets are weighted to reflect the process by which the production took place, its impact on the community, its originality and uniqueness. The background of the producer or production team, the tools available to that producer, and the amount of time and money spent are all taken into account. Awards are given to programs that creatively address community needs, develop diverse community involvement, challenge conventional television formats, and move viewers to experience television in a different way.

The volunteers, who serve as judges in this purposely-inclusive process, learn what other people are doing in access centers from far-flung regions of the US. They hear their stories, learn their issues, and

come to know their passions.

Hometown USA winners receive national recognition for something they do on a local level; no other venue provides this opportunity. A sampler tape of winning entries is made available to access stations. An "Award for Overall Excellence" is given to outstanding access centers that create a body of high-quality locally produced programs with a wide range of community involvement. This year, Overall Excellence was divided into Public Access, Educational Access, Government Access, and Local Origination, and each category was subdivided by three budget brackets.

The challenges to organizing a democratically based competition are many. In the struggle to be inclusive, *Hometown* coordinators have endlessly arranged and re-arranged the number and types of entry categories. David Vogel, executive director of CTV of Knoxville, recalls "In the early years of the NFLCP, I can remember having 5-hour discussions about Hometown categories." He is not alone in those remembrances.

In this year's 2001 festival, there were 40 categories to which producers could enter their programs in three separately judged divisions: volunteer, professional, and student. The complexity of organizing judging panels at sites across the country for all of these categories and divisions can be daunting, but maintaining a "grassroots" and community-based judging process is a testament to the integrity of the organizations and the *Hometown USA* organizers.

Hometown Festival awards are presented at a gala event at the Annual International Alliance for Community

Media Conference. One of the challenges that present itself each year is how to conduct the awards presentation ceremony. It was probably no one's intention to create 30 second "sound bites" out of access programming; access producers have a natural aversion to this type of television con-

vention! But as the number of entries to Hometown grew and likewise, the number of categories and winners, the need to streamline the video clips shown at the awards ceremony became crucial.

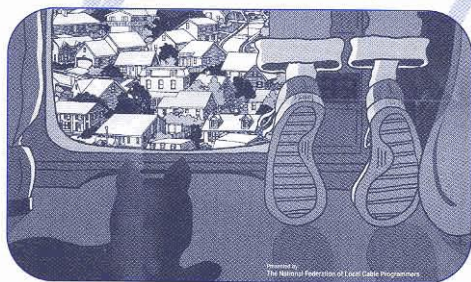
Former chair of the NFLCP, Jan Leshner (85-87), noted with a shudder that

the Chicago Hometown ceremony hit an all time long-evening record at three and a half hours. Suggestions for a better way surface each year and new experiments are tried. But in many ways, the *Hometown Awards Ceremony* does maintain an Academy Awards night flavor. The venue is always classy, the reception always a treat, and it is not unusual for attendees to "dress to the nines" especially those accepting their awards. It is always an honor to become a Hometown winner.

A commemoration of *Hometown USA* in this issue, [celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the NFLCP] would not be complete without thanking the wonderful people who have contributed over the years to the success of this video festival. Although management methods to this madness have been many, sometimes 'in house,' sometimes 'contracted out,' it is a must to remember that from 1988 to 1995, Sue Buske, with Randy VanDalsen, did a fantastic job organizing and mounting the *Hometown Festival*, and most recently Steve Fortriede has continued the tradition.

The *Hometown USA Video Festival* is a unique competition, a treasured tradition, and a fitting celebration of what we are all about.

Anne D'Urso-Rose is the training director at MATV in Malden, Massachusetts.



PEG Access & the Law

A THUMBNAIL HISTORY

BY JAMES N. HORWOOD

Cable television access channels date back to the 1960s when a number of bidders to obtain cable franchises in New York City proposed to provide the equivalent of an electronic soapbox to local residents. Beginning in July 1971, cable companies in New York have been required to provide public access channels.

Federal activity dealing with PEG access started in 1968 when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) initiated rule-making proceedings that led to regulations adopted in 1972. Those regulations required cable systems in the largest 100 markets (1) to have at least twenty channels of capacity, (2) to reserve three access channels for free use by public, educational, and governmental bodies, and (3) to reserve one channel for commercial leased access. The FCC modified and somewhat reduced those requirements in 1976. On appeal of the 1976 Report, the FCC's access regulations were found to be unlawful because they imposed a common carrier obligation that was not within the FCC's statutory power. *FCC v. Midwest Video Corp.*, 440 U.S. 689, 708-09 (1979). The court below had suggested that access requirements might violate the First and Fifth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, *FCC v. Midwest Video Corp.*, 571 F.2d 1025 (8th Cir. 1978), but PEG interests have successfully dodged that bullet in subsequent court decisions.

In response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Midwest Video*, Congress enacted the 1984 Cable Act, in which it expressly permitted local franchising authorities to require PEG access channels and support.

A significant court case in which the Alliance's predecessor, the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, participated by filing an *amicus curiae* (friend of the court) brief was *City of Los Angeles v. Preferred Communications, Inc.*, 476 U.S. 488 (1986), in which the Supreme Court ruled that, because of a "colorable First Amendment challenge," the rule of rationality, which will usually sustain legislation against other constitutional challenges, does not have the same force as it normally would. That case involved the issue of whether a cable franchise could be denied to a second operator on the ground of minimizing demand for the use of public rights-of-way and visual blight.

Another court case of some importance in which the NFLCP participated was *ACLU v. FCC*, 823 F.2d 1554 (D.C. Cir. 1987), in which the court reversed a contrary FCC determination and required that lock boxes be capable of blocking PEG channels when desired by a subscriber.

The next significant decision, in which the NFCCP participated, was *Erie Telecommunications v. City of Erie*, 659 F.Supp. 580 (W.D.Pa. 1987), *modified on other grounds*, 853 F.2d 1084 (3d Cir. 1988), in which the court rejected a number of First Amendment challenges to cable franchising including challenges regarding PEG access requirements.

A seminal decision concerning PEG access is *Missouri Knights of the Ku Klux Klan v. Kansas City, Mo.*, 723 F.Supp. 1347 (W.D. Mo.

1989), when the court ruled that public access requirements cannot be constitutionally eliminated if the purpose is to suppress speech. The NFLCP played a key role in that case by filing *amicus curiae* briefs opposing elimination of the public access channel.

The constitutionality of the PEG access provisions of the 1984 Cable Act (and the 1992 Cable Act) were directly challenged on First Amendment

grounds and found constitutional in *Daniels Cablevision, Inc. v. U.S.*, 838 F.Supp. 1 (D.C.C. 1993), *modified on other grounds sub nom., Time Warner Entertainment v. FCC*, 93 F.2d 957 (D.C. Cir. 1996). The Court of

Appeals decision left open the possibility that PEG requirements in individual franchises could be challenged as unconstitutional as they are applied.

PEG interests were on a roller coaster ride that ended safely as a result of Congress' actions in the 1992 Cable Act requiring the FCC to adopt regulations to permit cable operators to prohibit the use of PEG access facilities for programming "which contains obscene material, sexually explicit conduct, or material soliciting or promoting unlawful conduct." The Alliance, together with other organizations, participated in the FCC rulemaking proceeding arguing that the censorship regulations contemplated would violate the First Amendment. After the FCC adopted regulations, the Alliance challenged them and was initially successful before a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, which was reversed on rehearing en banc by the full D.C. Circuit (11 judges). The U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision agreed with the Alliance that the challenged provision of the 1992 Cable Act related to PEG access was unconstitutional and reversed the en banc decision. *Denver Area Educational Television Consortium v. FCC*, 518 U.S. 727 (1996).

Another important proceeding in which the Alliance participated (*amicus curiae*) was *Time Warner Cable of New York City v. City of New York*, 943 F.Supp. 1357 (S.D.N.Y. 1996), *aff'd in part*, 118 F.3d 917 (2d Cir. 1997), in which the court ruled that the city's attempt to place commercial news networks on government access channels violated the cable franchise because the programming did not serve a governmental purpose and that a requirement to carry such commercial programming could violate the cable operator's right to exercise editorial discretion over what programming to carry. Importantly, however, the court distinguished between improper and proper use of channels for PEG purposes and, agreeing with the Alliance's position, found that the operator does not



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THE LEGAL FUTURE

Because of changes in technology and industry structure, the next 25 years will continue to pose challenges to the preservation of PEG access and the expansion of the interests served by PEG access. There is a good foundation of court decisions upholding the constitutionality of PEG access requirements and the rights of those seeking to use such access as a forum for speech. But those decisions are largely based on existing federal laws and many of those benefits could be swept away by new legislation or (to think positively) could be expanded by new legislation.



As the lines between communications industries shift or are eliminated, there will be pressure for legislation that treats cable companies, telephone companies, direct broadcast satellite companies, information service providers and others the same. Industry pressure will be toward the lowest common denominator: less (or no) access and support for access rather than more access and support. The Alliance and others interested in promoting the availability of a forum for electronic communication for those without ready (or any) access to dominant or mainstream media will need to be vigilant, creative, and persistent. As new technology and existing technology develop and evolve, there may be an ability to serve the needs served by PEG access in different ways than traditional PEG access over cable, but for now, there is no adequate substitute, a message that needs to be conveyed to the federal government: Congress, the FCC and the Administration. Similar challenges have been, and will continue to be, presented in state legislatures.

The Alliance has a strong, positive and important message that needs to be heard. I believe PEG access can and will not only survive, but thrive, in meeting the increasing challenges that we will face.

—James N. Horwood

have an underlying right to the channels and “has no First Amendment right to editorial discretion over channels that it never had a right to use.” 943 F.Supp. at 1396.

Two important court decisions were issued as the Alliance ended its first 25 years: *Joe Ed Bunton v. City of Palestine*, No. 6:99 CV 605, D.C. E.D.Tx., order granting Temporary Injunction, June 11, 2000, and *Cablevision of the Midwest, Inc. v. City of Brunswick, Ohio*, No. 1:99 CV 1442 (D.C.N.D. Ohio, Dec. 18, 2000). Neither decision has been published, but they are available at www.spiegelmc.com/bunton_injunction_order.htm and www.spiegelmc.com/wnew.htm#brunswick.

In the *Joe Ed Bunton* case, the court granted a preliminary injunction to a public access programmer and required the city to restore his access to a channel which the city had eliminated in a franchise renewal. The court found that the city had created a limited public forum, which could not be eliminated unless the city satisfied the burden of establishing that its action was unrelated to the suppression of free expression and no greater than necessary to the furtherance of its interests. The Alliance assisted Joe Ed Bunton in his litigation.

The *Brunswick* case involved a denial of a cable franchise renewal based on failure of the cable operator to satisfy local programming and PEG access requirements. It is the first case to go entirely through the full franchise renewal process, including formal on-the-record administration proceedings. It is particularly important in that it supports the proposition that the local franchise authority's decision is entitled to deference by a reviewing court.

In addition to the foregoing, there have been a number of other court decisions over the years involving public access, particularly with respect to the First Amendment rights of programmers which have reached different conclusions, largely depending on the facts in those cases. Those in which programmers have prevailed include: *Palange v. Denver Community TV*, No. 92-CV-4429 (D.C.D.Colo., Aug 31, 1994); *Altmann v. Television Signal Corp.*, 849 F.Supp. 1335 (N.D.Cal. 1994); *Glendora v. Cablevision Systems Corp.*, 893 F.Supp. 264 (S.D.N.Y. 1995); *Coplin v. Fairfield Public Access Television Committee*, 111 F.2d 1395 (8th Cir. 1997); *McClellan v. Cablevision of Connecticut, Inc.*, 149 F.3d 161 (2d Cir. 1998), and *Moss v. Cablevision Systems Corp.*, 22 F.Supp. 2d 1 (E.D.N.Y. 1998). Cases ruling against programmers include: *Rickel v. Mountain Valley Television Corp.*, No. C-96-1033 (D.C.N.D. Cal., Nov. 25, 1996); *TCI Cablevision of Washington, Inc. v. Aivaz*, 1998 U.S. Dist LEXIS 20570 (W.D. Wash. 1998); *Nebraska v. Harrold*, 256 Neb. 829 (1999); *Jersawitz v. People TV*, 71 F.Supp. 2d 1330 (N.D.Ga. 1999); *Goldberg v. Cablevision Systems Corp.*, 69 F.Supp. 2d 398 (1999); and *Loce v. Time Warner Entertainment*, 191 F.2d 256 (2d Cir. 1999) (involving leased access). Another significant case, which awaits resolution on remand is *Horton v. City of Houston*, 179 F.3d 188 (5th Cir. 1999), in which the court of appeals ruled that the nonprofit organization managing public access has the burden of justifying that a charge to cablecast programs not locally produced is narrowly tailored to promote localism and that the level of the fee is appropriate for its purpose.

Finally, there have been a number of important cases over the years that have dealt with issues not directly related to PEG access but which have had, and will continue to have, significant influence on PEG access availability. For example, *Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. v. FCC*, 512 U.S. 622 (1994), upheld broadcast must carry requirements as not violative of cable operators' First Amendment rights; *City of Chicago v. FCC*, 199 F.3d 424 (7th Cir. 1999), ruled that a cable franchise cannot be required of a company that distributes video programming to subscribers using a common carrier's transmission facilities; and decisions concerning whether or not Internet access over cable systems is a “cable service” have reached inconsistent conclusions (*AT&T Corp. v. City of Portland*, 216 F.3d 871 (9th Cir. 2000); *MediaOne Group, Inc. v. County of Henrico, Virginia*, 97 F.Supp. 2d 712 (E.D.Va. 2000), appeal pending 4th Cir. Nos. 00-1680, et al.; *Gulf Power Co. v. FCC*, 208 F.3d 1263 (11th Cir. 2000), cert. granted sub nom *NCTA v. Gulf Power*, 121 S.Ct. 879 (2001); and *Comcast Cablevision of Broward County, Inc. v. Broward County*, 124 F.Supp. 685 (2000).

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33 Years Later

WHY ACCESS?

BY BOB DEVINE

Just before his death in 1859, Antioch College's founder, noted educator Horace Mann, challenged the graduating class to "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity," and that challenge became the college's mantra. It is thus not surprising that Antioch's curriculum in communications has been, from its beginnings in the mid-1960s, more focused on issues of social justice and social change than it is on media production.

In acquiring a great deal of video equipment through a grant in 1965, the college had been extremely fortunate in never having their efforts defined as "television." Early use of video at Antioch focused on researching feedback and process-oriented applications of the medium rather than on producing "programs." The complement to the usual academic critique of the mass media was the "grounded practice" of change-oriented media work within the political, economic and cultural context of actual communities. It seemed natural in an era of civil rights and anti-war activism, and in the shadow of the Koerner commission report, that the change-oriented community organizing and social justice dimensions of public access work would play a central role in Antioch's program.

The Communications program at Antioch was in large part shaped by student experiences in the field. Antioch students were of course as interested in the allures of new technologies and networks as most, but they were more interested in the potential of those technologies for engaging communities and improving the human condition. The coalition that came together around public access at Antioch mirrored the coalition that came together at the national level in the interest of securing access provisions in federal regulation. Some had read work from the *Challenge for Change* program, saw the new media as auguring activism and community empowerment, and were drawn to activities involving community organizing. Some had abiding interest in public policy *vis a vis* the information economy and the existing communications infrastructure, and were drawn to regulatory and franchise work. A number had strong interests in democratic theory and First Amendment issues, and were drawn to system design, policy formation, and devising of the mechanisms to enfranchise broader constituents in support of invigorating local (and national) political dialogue and debate. Those interested in the potential of technology for expression saw public access as a new venue for art, as an experimental arena for the exploration of new technologies, and as a means to preserve and protect unique local cultural practices. Still another thread of interest had grounding in Friesian approaches to education, and some students found themselves actively experimenting with the training programs of public access to test models of community education and "problematizing." The intellectual fervor that motivated this generation of Antioch student and faculty activists derived from Dorothy Todd Henaut, George Stoney, Tim Kennedy, Paolo

Friere, Red Burns, Nicholas Johnson and Paul Ryan.

The Communications Studies Center developed a hands-on curriculum that engaged Antioch students in franchising, training and activist work across the country. Since the 1920s the core of Antioch's educational model has been a cooperative education program that requires students to spend every other term off-campus working on a "co-op job." Students with interests in social justice, political change, community organizing, cybernetics, and the emerging landscape of new technologies and delivery systems gravitated toward co-op job opportunities in cable and public access. They assumed leadership of various projects involving franchising, ascertainment, training and access startup, both as co-op jobs, and as student-initiated courses on campus. And so Antioch student Trisha Dair did research on community ascertainment and training and wrote grants; Steve Christiansen worked on developing models of networked programming; Howard Horton worked on writing franchises; Dinah LeHoven and Rick Newberger worked on franchising and the development of training systems; and a host of other students got involved in various access startups and training opportunities. Those with a direct influence on those of us at Antioch included Sue Buske, Jim Bell, Jean Rice, Fred Johnson, Margie Nicholson, and of course George Stoney.

A number of the principles of the community-based media work that emerged during those early years of public access continue to inform and guide Antioch's program and my own reflections about the future direction of community access. In contemplating the next 33 years of public access (and I hope to be involved throughout), it seems important to me to be thinking beyond the tactical, strategic and operational dimensions of public access work to consider "why" it is an important effort, and why it is critical that we defend, preserve and extend public access. And so I offer a beginning list of the principles and potentials of public access that have to do with community outcomes.

▲ 1. Public access shifts the balance between producers and consumers of communications messages. The impermeable roles of producers of messages (active and few in number) and consumers of messages (passive and many in number) reflect the economic organization of media industries, not the predisposition of (a) the uses to which people might put communications technologies, were such technologies to be at their disposal, or (b) the ends to be served by way of interaction, cultural practice, etc. Jankowski, Prehn and Stappers, in *The People's Voice: Local Radio and Television in Europe*, (Jankowski, et. al., 1992) describe an alternative in which communicants are "sendceivers," and are actively engaged in both roles in the communication process.

Public access draws private citizens into public life, transforming consumers into public speakers/participants, and moving them from passive into active roles of engagement in the civic life of their community. The results are a more lively and participatory local democratic forum, an arena where global issues and

entertainment is balanced by the presence of unique local cultural practices and expression, and where participants become more engaged as an active polity rather than as a target for communications messages.

▲ 2. As a corollary, public access permits a focus on the public good rather than the private good. Mass media delivery systems confine “audiences” to the role of individual consumers. In our “marketplace of ideas”, our speech is relatively free from domination by the state, but it is not free from domination by the market. Markets produce private good, but not necessarily public good. The marketplace of ideas, for example, provides the most benefit for those with the necessary resources to enter and utilize its potential. Corporate entities stridently assert rights as self-interested speakers (private good), and their marketing, advertising or public relations messages go unchallenged in terms of the value and common benefit of their messages (public good). In addition, such messages go unchallenged by speakers lacking sufficient resources to enter the marketplace on an equal footing. Public opinion regarding the public good has been transformed into something that is assessed on the basis of aggregate individual interests through polling, and distributed rather than forged by an informed and active public.

While the First Amendment protects autonomous expression (a private good), a parallel thread involves, in the language of Supreme Court Justice Brennan in *New York Times Company vs. Sullivan*, the goal of an uninhibited, robust and open marketplace of ideas (a public good). An enlightened and informed polity depends on having access to a diversity of opinions and viewpoints and being able to engage in public dialogue and discussion about such viewpoints in attempting to ascertain the truth. Public access has often forgotten its responsibility for this public dimension of the First Amendment over the years, and has followed the path of least resistance in championing autonomous individual expression, without promoting the utilitarian values of public discussion, deliberation and debate.

Public access potentially provides a viable forum beyond the intimidation or intervention of the state, and beyond the economic imperatives or dominance of the marketplace, where individuals can come together to deliberate on the issues of the day. Though it can be enslaved by the private benefits of

autonomous expression, it has the potential, as well, to champion the speech that promotes the principles of popular sovereignty, to sustain a system of democratic deliberation, and to promote broad concern with the “common good”.

▲ 3. The work of public access involves building “social capital.” The interaction and collaboration of community members in the various processes of public access can create a sense of mutuality, trust, reciprocity and support that has been referred to as “social capital” (Putnam, 1993). “If members of the group come to expect that others will behave reliably and honestly,” Francis Fukayama notes, “then they will come to trust one another. Trust acts like a lubricant that makes any group or organization run more efficiently.” (Fukayama, 2000, p. 98) In the process of bringing community members together in access-related work,

many of us have discovered that the networks of association, the alliances across improbable boundaries, and the coalitions and collaborations that result in unique community dynamics, are often times more productive, valuable and fascinating than whatever actual programming is produced.

The benefits of such social capital are striking. Strangers become acquaintances, and often allies. Their voluntary association, work and contributions to the common good of the community through public access activity builds a “bank” of social capital upon which they and other members of the community can draw at some future time. Individual citizens move from the individual consumer role to the collective agent role, and begin to act as a “public”, outside of the state and the marketplace. The work of individuals and groups in access often extends to civic and community projects and activism beyond the scope of the particular access activity. The dialogue engendered contributes to the solution of complex community problems and contributes to a healthy civil society.

Public access inevitably contributes to the pool of social capital in every community in which it exists.

▲ 4. Public access permits cultural integrity of media expression. Public access permits participants to frame expression that is shaped by and addresses their own cultural position, to produce representations which are sensitive to, congruent with and appropriate to the issues of their own cultural orientation, and to use public access to correct the inaccurate, incorrect, misleading or demeaning images of the mainstream media with regard to particular cultural positions, orientations or issues. Rather than being spoken about or spoken for, public access speakers are of the community in which they are speaking, and are able to speak for themselves. (See Jay Ruby, 1991, for a discussion of the subtle differences involved)

Public access permits a level of cultural integrity of expression that is unparalleled in most media channels, and this is one of the unique strengths of the public access endeavor.

▲ 5. Public access contributes to the development of critical literacy. According to Everett Rogers, literacy implies the mastery of symbols, the ability to encode and decode messages, or “write” and “read,” to manipulate symbols, to generalize through symbolization, to restructure reality via the manipulation of symbols, to empathize with roles beyond one’s experience, to think counterfactually, and “to create a mental distinction between symbol and reality.” (Rogers, 1969, p. 72) Literacy implies the power to speak and have influence, the power to act, and the ability to distance oneself from the expediences of everyday existence through the use of symbols.

Literacy of course implies the ability to have access to information (including active information-seeking), to interpret, analyze, evaluate and “read” media critically, to reflect on and deconstruct the codes and methods of message construction, and ultimately, “To name and analyze conditions of every day life and organize against them.” (Kidd, 1993, p.23). What is often overlooked, however, is the manner in which “writing” informs reading. With electronic media, the capacity for symbol manipulation and counter-factual thinking permits the development of critical, rather than imitative literacy. The construction of messages leads to the analysis of the manner in which meaning is generated and circulated through media messages. The critical reader/writer of electronic messages (the public access producer, or “sendceiver”)

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is able to articulate grievances, to organize and collectivize action, to open up sites of opposition and analysis, to express cultural positions and values, to register opposition, to propose alternative courses of action, to influence others, and contribute to the formation of public opinion. The ability to write, in short, provides rich and productive avenues for civic participation.

Public access provides a point of entry into the power and dominance channels of electronic communication. Its capacity to develop critical literacy — both reading and writing significantly enhances the possibility of true democratic participation among its participants.

As the technology, the delivery systems, layers of regulation and the general corporate and political environment of electronic communications continues to evolve with each new generation of access producers and providers, what continues to remain relevant, current and focused 33 years later are the fundamental principles of why community access is so critical to civic and democratic culture.

Bob Devine has been involved with public access since 1968, has participated in the startup of the Dallas, Milwaukee and New York access systems, and is currently president of Antioch College at Yellow Springs, Ohio.

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Incredible Highs & Dark Moments

BY SHARON INGRAHAM

The destiny of access channels and community media in this country and the history of the Alliance have much in common — incredible highs and successes, the darkest moments when all seems lost and never enough money. Serving as Alliance/NFLCP Chair during 1987-91 was no different.

When I was elected chair at the 1987 National Convention in Chicago, a massive panic attack set in. Who was I to take this on, where would I go for help? The aloneness of the moment was warmed by the assurance of former Chair Diana Peck, who said, "Don't worry, Sharon, the network will fall in place." And it did.

The challenges faced by the board were immense. With Sue Buske now in California, we were about to make the difficult (and eventually unsuccessful) adjustment to a new executive director. The organization was nearly \$200,000 in debt. There were threats from legislation and regulation. The controversy over hate programming, personified by the Kansas City case, was at a peak.

By year two, we had moved from our larger offices on Pennsylvania Avenue SE to a single room in the former Cambodian Embassy on the far reaches of 16th St NW. In order to get us through these tough financial times, I pitched in for the next three years as acting executive director, flying back and forth to Washington nearly every month and paying Alliance bills at my kitchen table, etc. Reginald Carter did outstanding work alone in Washington, manning the phone, handling memberships and publication orders and everything else on his own. The members of the Board helped see to it that virtually every service that members were accustomed to kept on going, including more frequent appearance by *CMR* (then *CTR*), which was now contracted out.

During those years, the International seat was established on the board, the "Grassroots Caucus," "Gay and Lesbian Caucus," SIG's and Equal Opportunity Caucuses saw their needs meet even greater recognition. We co-sponsored the First Amendment Conference with the UCC Office of Communication. Our advocacy efforts were substantial and often successful. The Alliance testified before both the House and Senate Telecommunications Subcommittees, appeared on *Good Morning America*, was featured in national publications including an editorial in *USA Today*, the *NYT* and *LA Times*. Membership numbers began to move upward. In 1991, with the deficit largely conquered, a new executive director joining us and more spacious offices now ready to move into, it was time to move on.

Without the teamwork displayed by the board, staff, contractors and members throughout this period, the Alliance would not have weathered the many challenges of those years. I may have been honored with the Buske Leadership Award in 1992, but you—the members and volunteers of the Alliance—won that award with me.

Update: Still living in Acton, MA, Sharon serves on the board of directors of the Digital Credit Union, one of the largest in the US. She is also a member of the Civil Air Patrol, USAF Auxiliary and participates in ground and air search and rescue operations (wearing official military fatigues!) In response to issues faced by her children, she is also an advocate for improved mental health and special education services for children and young adults in Massachusetts. She was the 1992 recipient of the Buske Leadership Award.



The Access Center & the Smart City

BY JEAN RICE

Access centers have seized the new opportunities brought on by developments in bandwidth capacity, regionalization, technology and the Internet and can play a vital role in the Smart City of the future. This role will be shaped over the next several years by each access center's vision of its goals in the telecommunications age.

The telecommunications infrastructure in the U.S. continues its constant growth in complexity and experimentation, albeit with some fits and upstarts. This infrastructure is connected globally and along with local cultures rooted in towns, cities, and counties there are cyber-cultures operating within virtual spaces. This poses special challenges on the local level.

Planning issues for municipalities are advancing from regulating use of the public right of way to planning intelligent infrastructure development and in deciding social policy issues. Intelligent infrastructure issues range from regulations, which allow the maximum amount of competition to fiber rich deployment in industrial parks. A number of social policy issues are at the fore, such as effective ways to bridge the digital divide, how transport and telecommunications optimally interact, expanding provision of e-government services, and enhancing local economic, social, and cultural development.

Access centers can assist in developing telecommunications-oriented planning strategies at the municipal level through avenues such as participation in task forces or formal planning processes or informal meetings with local planners and stakeholders. Access centers invariably have a working relationship with the cable access community, the media centers of the hospitals, schools and institutions of higher education, libraries and other

providers of video and web training and/or programming in the community. This community of local multimedia stakeholders can provide a significant base of resources for the public side of Smart City development. Meetings between this base group and municipal representatives to discuss various social policy issues and future telecommunications goals may develop meaningful synergies on particular issues and may provide insightful reviews can provide a base for future Smart City opportunities. In addition, regional and state telecommunications initiatives can support and be enhanced by the local Smart City approach.

Access centers should look at Smart City goals in the light of their own missions to determine any mutual objectives and what resources the access center can offer. Following are a few examples of approaches access centers can take in finding their role in a Smart City.

▲ E-City methods of delivering information and providing services to the public are a high priority on many Smart City lists. The use of electronic kiosks to deliver information is one method being tried. Imagine the same kiosk that processes building permits also processing membership applications for the historical society, with the access center providing the community half of the data base. Taking it the next step, the access center can plan for how this Kiosk-based development would be linked to provide on-line public services to the library, community college, various public spaces and local web pages.

▲ Information on demand is an oft-cited principle of the new media. Whether it is video or interactive TV on demand in real time or video streaming on the Internet, the access centers video capability's make it a perfect resource for these quality of life

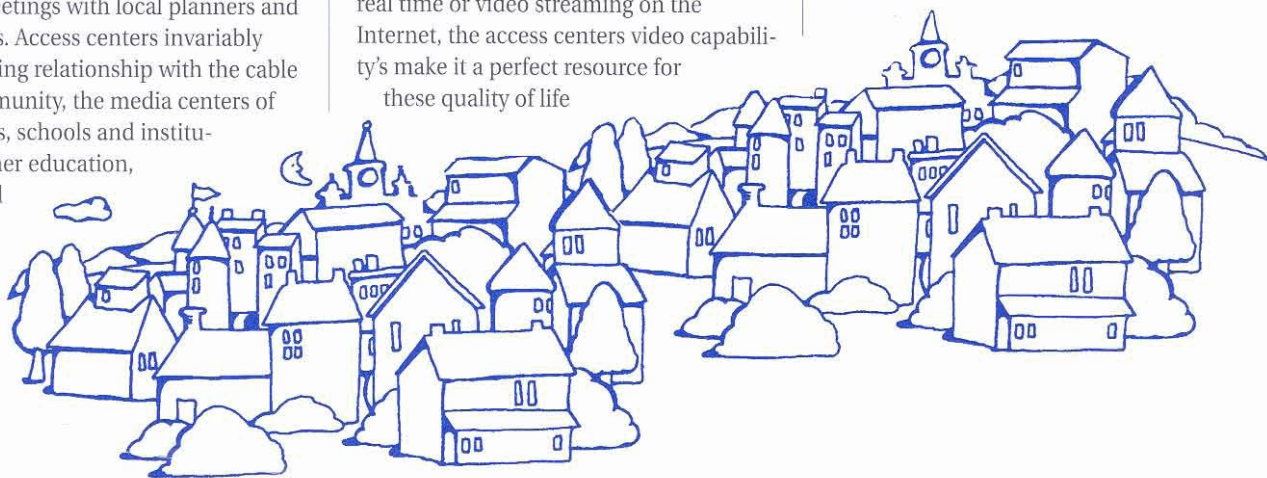
and educationally related information programs. In this way the access center can become the place-based media exchange center.

▲ Some access centers support information technology and offer Internet training and services. This resource can become part of a Smart City plan for breaking down digital divide barriers to include more marginalized social groups and organizations.

▲ Supporting existing initiatives, such as sustainable communities and small business incubators is a challenge for local access centers which already have a mission. In these cases, it is important to identify what small, but necessary components of the initiative can be provided by the access centers. For sustainable communities programs, possibly the access center can assist in publicity, development of programming which can be used within the community itself. For the small business incubator, publicity may play an integral role or the access center can help match local expertise to the needs of incubator projects.

The Smart City initiative provides an opportunity for the access center to review its mission for the future in the context of building a Smart City. Hopefully, in the next anniversary issue, the development of Smart Cities will be on the list of opportunities seized by access centers.

Jean Rice was the first Chair of the Educational Planning Committee as the NFLCP was being formed. She is a founding member and has stayed active with support for the organization. She is a Municipal Telecommunications Consultant and partner in Rice Williams Associates, Washington DC, rwatelcom@erols.com



EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

The E in PEG Access Has Struggled

BY LAURIE CIRIVELLO

When I was asked to write an article about "E" in PEG Access for the anniversary issue, I struggled with getting my hands around the big picture. Having co-edited the spring 2001 issue of *CMR* on Access and Media Education and having organized the "E" track at last year's conference in Tucson, I had assumed it would be a fairly simple task. After all, I certainly know what I think about Educational Access and how it should look. But the prospect of creating a snapshot of Educational Access as part the Alliance for Community Media suddenly seemed a daunting task. So I decided that figuring out why it was difficult was the place to begin.

As I reflected on the input from numerous "E" practitioners, I began to understand that this was such a difficult task because I was looking at the issue from the wrong vantage point. Instead of considering the definition of educational access as it fits in community media, maybe it makes more sense to look at how education contributes to the community in community media. In some talking points for this issue, George Stoney wrote "we need to find ways to encourage a wider community support for our access centers as valued community resources akin to the status of public libraries." Most, if not all, communities value education and hold opportunities to learn as among the most treasured local assets. By focusing on how community media provides support and tools for learning along side of our other community building priorities, we become less focused on the territorial issues and more on our key role in services most valued in our communities. A current example of this philosophy, from Newton, Massachusetts, where despite an initially disinterested school administration, NewTV is aggressively assisting the development and launch of the previously under-utilized "E" in their PEG structure. Beginning with a board commitment of considerable resources and a focused effort to cultivate access activities with the schools," Executive Director Paul Berg has initiated numerous specific activities intended to strengthen and support education in Newton. A new, more receptive administration has made this integration of NewTV services even more welcome.

In Contra Costa County. Two different models for educational access were presented for consideration at the educator's symposium. One was a consortium for educational access and the other a combined PEG/Media Center model. Both models highlighted the opportunities that exist when media technology is applied to specific local needs. Both promoted full inclusion of existing programs and encouraged the community to not replace, but augment current services. In Sonoma County, community media has established a strong partnership role to help in efforts to promote healthier choices through media literacy training. The symposium was a sell-out. In Knoxville, the community TV center's new educational access activities will focus initially on language instruction, a clearly identified need in that community. Education access activities vary from vocational training, to distance learning, to media literacy, to the use of technology as a

tool to teach academics. But almost all are integrated with existing educational programs and clearly partnered with the local community.

Serena Mann, Alliance national board member and general manager of UMTV at the University of Maryland, sums it up by saying "Bottom line—there appears to be no consistent mission you can take from station to station." Her particular station uses educational access to promote the university and support its vision.

Serena Mann is right. There is no consistent model for "E." I have come to the conclusion that maybe that's as it should be. She continued, "As for the Alliance and educational access, I feel public has been stressed, often to the detriment of education and government." It is my observation that as an organization, the Alliance for Community Media has made great strides toward inclusion of all non-commercial, community-based media through advocacy, support and training activities. In name and mission, the emphasis is on empowerment and accessibility to build community. As individual members, however, many of us (myself included) still spend too much energy trying to define the differences between the three divisions of access.

Let's practice what we profess, and place less emphasis on PEG and more on community. If we do that, the role and function of "E" becomes obvious. It's the very same as public and government access—to apply technology resources to serve the broad and varied needs of our local communities and residents. Chris Jensen, executive director of SNCAT in Reno, Nevada, puts it this way.

"We have the tools, training, and delivery systems to make a difference in our community. Education is the heart of access. It's the thread that is woven all through." If we as members can collectively embrace this point of view, then we will need to worry less about whether as an organization we are being fully inclusive of educational access.

Keep the focus on local needs and we have a much better chance of establishing community media, as George Stoney says, as "valued community resources." And in my opinion, that's the whole point.

Laurie Cirivello is the executive director of the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa in Santa Rosa, California and serves on the Western States Regional Board. Email: lcirivello@communitymedia.org

...the Alliance for Community Media has made great strides toward inclusion of all non-commercial, community-based media....In name and mission, the emphasis is on empowerment and accessibility to build community. As individual members, however, many of us...still spend too much energy trying to define the differences between the three divisions of access.

Early Days of Government Access

'Enabling citizens to view the decision-making process in the raw'

BY ANDY BEECHER

On a bad day [today] in 1986, the government television operator need only recall a bad day in 1974, when the one-half inch reel-to-reel tape fell to the floor, left its dull side up, and rolled all the way down the hall to the planning department. Or, when the first live signal from the city council meeting looked like the first video of the moon. There is no doubt that the technology of early video centers often had reliability and credibility problems.

Yet, those were exciting times! To be providing an electronic "window on government," enabling citizens to view the decision-making process in the raw, and to give numerous departments the opportunity to deliver and publicize their

concerns.

During this period, several studies advocating the need for access to cable television for individuals, community groups, local governments, schools, libraries and health institutions were conducted by groups such as the Jones Commission and the Sloan Commission. These studies formed the foundation for the Federal Communications Commission's 1972 cable rules, which set minimum requirements for public, educational, government, and leased access.

According to Steve Effros, "The cities really wanted to do things. I think a primary reason for this was the libraries in the 1970s were interested in the potential of producing cable programming...There was an activist head of the American

Library Association at the time...and it was inevitable that cable operators were going to give them a channel."

Effros said that in the Commission's development of the 1972 rules, "Access was not an issue of contention. It was generally felt the Access concept was a good one. The question was: should it be limited? The answer was yes." He

explained that "Some cities asked for large amounts of channel space to be reserved for access in perpetuity...without even setting up budgets to operate them...This was where the contention between the cities and cable operators grew."

The FCC was being approached by many interest groups who wanted to be represented in the development of guidelines for access. Effros explained, "If the Commission (had) just set up two channels, it could have sparked local wars...Fire departments wanted channels

for training; schools wanted channels, one for the elementary school, one for the high school, one for the community college; some city councils wanted them too. The Commission opted to establish the now famous "PEG" access channels (public, educational, and governmental), as well as leased access. One of each of these was required in franchises in the top 100 television markets, augmented by the "N plus one" rule, which stipulated that when one channel was filled, the franchising authority could require that an additional channel of that type of access be put on the system.

Effros said, "The cities were not being realistic in their desires for quantities of channels. They were told that access was the greatest thing since sliced bread, but nobody focused on the cost of doing it right, making it viable. He said: "One of the greatest ironies is that while the cities were so interested in channels of all types for access. But, when a proposal that was put forward requiring allocation of a portion of the franchise fee for access, it was defeated by several major cities involved in franchising at the time."

This conflict did not leave much room for optimism for activists who wanted to see local government programming develop in their communities. However the institutionalization of the term "government access" in the 1972 rules, and the guarantee for channels to facilitate its use during a five-year experimental period, provided sufficient grounds for the development of a number of successful government access operations.

— excerpted from the full story in
Community Television Review,
Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 1986

Andy Beecher, one of the first Interns with Alternate Media Center, later became programming director at the Metropolitan Area Communications Commission in Beaverton, Oregon. He contributed a regular column, "Government Access Corner" to the CTR for many years. Andy has the distinction of having bicycled the furthest to attend a conference in East Lansing, Michigan in 1980. At last word, he was working for AT&T.



Andy Beecher, center in tie, with [l to r] Paula Manley, George Stoney, Alan Bushong and Sharon Ingraham at the 1988 Tampa conference.

services was a wonderful and meritable endeavor, particularly during this post-Watergate period when people wanted to see more openness in their government.

The concept of government access grew out of the public access movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Access advocates who believed the disenfranchised should have access to the tools of television production and transmission also supported the public's right to know how governmental decisions were made and how government aimed to increase public awareness of social and political

When Rika asked me to do this government access piece for CMR on the 25th anniversary of the Alliance, my head spun. Let's see...

1972—my first video (University professors said it was a fad); 1976—creation of NFLCP (Alliance for Community Media); 1977—my first job in public access hired by Sue Buske (people thought I was crazy to get mixed up with this stuff); 1979—my first job in government access (Broadband Telecommunications Specialist—people didn't know what I was); 1980—creation of NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Administrators) in its first conceptual spurt at an NFLCP-sponsored conference; 1981—the first NATOA conference; 2001—both organizations are still alive despite perpetual threats to their very existence along the way. My-my, time flies when your livelihood is constantly threatened.

Today, probably most governments that collect franchise fees (and most of them do) put that money right into the city coffers, the "general fund." Some of them put the funds towards trying to regulate the cable company. Or at least they did before most of their regulatory powers were exorcised—by the 1984 Communications Policy Act, the Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, and the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Until 1986, when the 1984 Act kicked in, most cities rarely received a complaint about cable TV rates. The cities controlled the rates, almost all the rates. After that, the cable companies' rates began to be deregulated...and skyrocket.

Many cities still file complaints with the FCC, challenging cable company increases in basic cable rates (the only things cities are allowed to challenge any more), and four years and \$25,000 later they might get a ruling for a 52 cent refund to each of the subscribers. Still, it's called due diligence. It's partly what the franchise fee is there for and that's what Congress, our representatives, has dealt us.

One of the biggest contributions of government access has been its role in the cable franchise renewal process. Educating cities about what opportunities potentially exist from this relationship for themselves and their communities and citizens is a huge feat. Once a city has seen the benefits of having a local channel to show what they're doing for the community, or city council members have seen themselves on TV (or better yet heard from others that they saw them on TV), they're hooked...

Then government access people go on to work with interested parties of the city and community to ascertain what needs and interests exist and what can be used during renewal negotiations. What follows for government access representatives is the most painful part of the process—negotiations—an unending wave of cable company representatives, from local to state to regional to corporate types to lawyers and consultants on both sides of the table, a process that can take three grueling years or more. During many cases people get married, change professions, some even die. It is a process that costs cities hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and labor, even in smaller cities. It is the single most

arduous thing I've ever gone through, not unlike beating one's head against a telephone pole over and over again. Lots of splinters. But, in the end, it paid off here, and it pays off in most places if the job is done well.

Several access channels, millions of dollars in benefits to the community in the form of money for access channels, equipment, programming, INETs, etc. A good consultant on the city's side can make all the difference.

Government access people are usually the glue in the process. Often government access people are the representatives of PEG and community interests at the negotiating table. If they aren't representing those interests, neither are other city people, and certainly not the cable people. If there are consultants at the table, they work for the city, and they'll do what the city tells them, unless the city is really clueless, in which case, the consultant

can lead and educate them. One major thing that does happen in some cities is that all the funding for access and cable TV goes into the general fund, a critical error, because extracting the money from a general fund is always problematic. Having funding pass through the city directly to the access entity, with that entity having its own city account, is clean and tidy. Having the franchise fee put into an enterprise fund, or some equivalent, separate from the general fund, allows the money to be used only for cable TV related purposes, and not spent on pot holes and traffic lights. Having the council pass a policy that the cable department will be self-suffi-

Still Crazy After All These Years

**'My-my, time flies when
your livelihood is
constantly threatened.'**

BY DREW SHAFFER



Covering the city council in Centreville, OH, 1985.

cient with these funds puts an end to the quibbling. It's a double-edged sword (you have to live within your means), but at least access gets the money. It's government access people who can set up each of these maneuvers. There is often a bonus when funding comes from the cable company and goes back to cable TV related endeavors—the cable company appears supportive of access!

With average income in many urban centers in the \$6,000–\$10,000 range, many government access channels, or telecommunications offices, concerned about the digital divide between the haves and have nots are pushing policies and initiatives to ensure that computers and community networks are available to all. Others are trying to ensure that citizen access to municipal business online is a reality—paying parking tickets, reviewing

Hidden Rewards

Receiving the Buske Award in recognition of my service to the Alliance was a great honor. But the truth is that whatever I was able to give to the work of this organization, I got back much more—lessons about politics and communities, insights into media and organizational growth, and most importantly, great friendships with people across the country. So I got one great award for what I gave, and it's an award I treasure, but the far greater rewards were there all along.

— Andrew Blau, former Alliance board chair and 1994 recipient of the Buske Leadership Award.

First Recipient

I am very proud to be the first recipient of the Jewel Ryan White Award. I proudly display the plaque in my office, and every day I try to demonstrate, in some way, my dedication and commitment to ensure and maintain population diversity in the field of community media. Thank you Alliance for Community Media for recognizing those who continue to carry the torch for the unheard voices and untold stories of our communities.

— Curtis Henderson, 1994

property records, filing state and city taxes, registering to vote (dare I say vote?), etc.

Other governments split their resources between regulation/administration/initiatives and programming efforts. We tried our first live interactive television experiment on the INET at a regional NFLCP conference here in 1982. A year later we worked with the university to do one live by satellite with Europe and both coasts. Fascinating stuff, but we hadn't really determined what useful applications of the technology might be. We just knew it had implications for the future. People thought we were crazy for even thinking about doing it.

The one thing virtually all government access channels have in common is the city council meeting. A "statistically significant" survey we conducted in our city (I get to say that, paying the \$12,000-plus fee) demonstrated in no uncertain terms that this one program was not only the most watched local program in the city, but made the government access channel the most watched local channel!

Making government more accessible and laying bare the workings of city hall, from cable-casting council meetings to offering easy access to voting records of elected officials, is no small feat and is perhaps one of the most important aspects of government access.

Then there is community programming. Some cities produce programming that might not typically be categorized as government programming but rather community programming, such as community events, nonprofit organizational events and activities, school and music events, sports, etc. We've gotten the most positive feedback from the community about this kind of programming. If it makes your channel integral to the community, it may be what ensures its existence if other sources of funding ever disappear.

Government access cable programming has moved from 1/2-inch reel-to-reel portapaks to a formidable arsenal that includes LANS, WANS, INETS, websites, digital video, interactive video, satellite programming, low power radio stations, streaming video, cable radio, interactive information systems, bulletin board systems, and so on. All viable, localized, targeted, value added as the cable operator would say—if you have something to say, or rather something worth saying.

As my friend Nick Johnson used to say, back home they used to take the garbage out, not bring it in. As my friend Dick Wheelwright used to say, if it's not saying anything, it's just noise, just static.

I think what they meant was that there's a lot of information and programming that's not saying anything worth saying. That's true of all

the media. Maybe that's why there are 500 channels and nothing worth watching. Maybe that's why there are so many dot com companies in trouble. You can buy all the newest gadgets—with the most pixels, highest resolution, fastest baud rates, most gigs, etc.—and it won't make any difference if it doesn't transmit knowledge. Not just information, not confusion, not re-hashed formulas, not the equivalent of a mall, and not commercial after commercial—but knowledge, information put into context.

Generations ago there were good storytellers who performed at least part of this function. Now, it may be up to access channels.

It can't be done with technology alone. Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan's mentor, didn't believe it could be done with mass communications technology, or even electronic technology at all. He saw these as agents of uniformity, empire, numbness and cruelty. And we certainly see these signs everywhere in our media. Access channels might be the one exception. Oral communication, in the Greek tradition, Innis thought, was inherently democratic and did consider the feelings of others. In essence, McLuhan turned Innis' theories upside down to produce *The Global Village*.

Since we can't turn the clock back, I'm still hopeful that what needs to be done can be with a combination of the expertise and emotions of humans as guides (avatars) and subject experts who integrate all the various technologies as tools and resources to create programs that are community dictated and driven. Subject experts help put the information presented into context. government access channels have the facilities, and their staff can act as the facilitators and the crew. We've started experimenting with this paradigm and format possibilities here. Took me two years to convince some people. Guess they think I'm still crazy.

This approach alters the paradigm, turns it upside down! It's bottom up, not top down. It's a risky role for government access channels. It's perhaps more suited for public access channels, but it does have the potential for helping to build and strengthen community, and perhaps create communities (self-organizing communities) and knowledge bases, which could be used as reference points for decision makers and future generations while working to serve the city. Not a bad role for access channels.

This is possible. This is something that's missing. This is something that's needed. This is certainly a challenge. Besides, who could resist? I'm crazy—right?

Drew Shaffer has been the broadband telecommunications specialist for Iowa City, Iowa since 1981. He continues to be active in the promotion of full community participation within the context of government access channels and resources. Contact him at dshaffer@avalon.net.



Reflections on Community Media Training

LOOKING BACK & LOOKING AHEAD

An interview with jesikah maria ross

jesikah maria ross has been actively involved in all facets of community media training for the past 10 years. Those of us who have been around for a while probably first remember her as being one of the pioneers in designing training curriculum and projects that integrated critical viewing activities alongside production training in the early 1990s, now commonly referred to as media literacy training. Since then she has helped to establish the concept of media literacy within Access training and recently completed a master's thesis entitled Community Television Training Reconsidered: A Model for Media Literacy, Social Capital, and Civic Engagement.

To begin, can you talk a little bit about the role and importance of training in the community media movement?

Well, throughout its history, the Access movement has asserted that it provides social benefits to communities. The original vision, coming out of the social protest era of the 1960s, focused on using video technology for empowerment and social change. By the mid-1990s, the Access vision was framed in terms of utilizing video and new media technology to “build and strengthen community”. And today, some folks including myself, define our mission as centered on social and community development. The way the access centers, and by extension the Access movement, implemented these social-benefits missions was through training programs. They were designed to teach ordinary folks how to use media tools to address their issues, share their ideas and cultures, nurture confidence and capacity. It was intended that they would communicate with their neighbors by creating and circulating programs over public access television channels, community radio frequencies, via the Internet and to a lesser degree through public screenings.

So with that perspective, I think training is one of the most important tasks of media access centers. To me, training has played one of the most vital, yet least recognized roles in attaining the social benefits goals Access strives for. And I think effective training—whether you define training to include outreach, mentorship, production assistance, workshops or all of the above—is crucial to the evolution and advancement of the field. It is a cornerstone in our foundation that needs to stay strong, useful, and well positioned to support us into our future.

I say that because I feel that although over the many years Access practitioners have gained a solid background in successfully teaching community members how to use television and other production equipment, I'm not so convinced that we've figured out how to create training programs that not only build technical skills but also encourage personal development (often referred to as “empowerment”), community engagement, and critical perspective. And I think in these times of fickle policymakers, the incessant commercialization of public space, and let's not forget the ever-changing telecommunications landscape, our training needs to generate measurable community development outcomes to survive and flourish. We need to demonstrate our public value

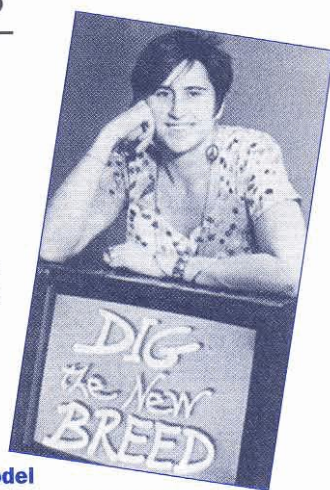
and community impact if we want to keep our slot on the dial and place at the funding table.

I know you've spent time researching and writing about community TV training, from Canada's Challenge for Change Project, which was the original model for public access television, to a CMR dedicated to current US training principles and practices. Tell us about some of the key themes or trends you've observed in community training, over the years?

I'd say that overall the most notable theme or trend I've sensed is the change in training models. The training model used in the early years of the Access movement (both in Canada and the U.S.) followed a self-help community development paradigm. Self-help is based on the premise that people can, will, and should collaborate to solve community problems. Self-help community development typically involved a facilitator—sometimes called a social animator or community organizer—who worked with a group, serving as a resource and a guide, helping the group identify and prioritize issues, analyze problems, and create plans for action. Similarly, Access trainers and outreach workers during this period often served as facilitators, teaching citizens how to use technology in the context of identifying needs and interests, addresses concerns, and circulating culture. This type of training was process oriented and participant driven. The goal was personal empowerment, community improvement, and social transformation.

Over the years, however, the primary training model used in the Access movement shifted away from self-help toward another community development approach: technology transfer. Technology transfer is based on the belief that disempowerment and disadvantage stem from a lack of access to innovations in technology. Once provided with technology and training in its use, people are able to use it to improve conditions of individual and community life. Following a technology transfer approach, most current Access training programs began to prioritize teaching individuals how to access and operate community television equipment to produce public access television programs rather than engage the public in an interactive processes of personal and community betterment. In other words, training became more technology focused and product driven. The goal seemed to be to generate programs to cablecast on community access channels, instead of emphasizing individual and community communication building.

I should point out that I'm speaking generally here. Access centers are wildly diverse and have different types of training programs based on the center's mission, training philosophy, resources, and assessed community needs. But in terms of general trends, I'd say the shift from 'self-help' to 'technology transfer' is a major one.



Your recent publications have pointed out several of issues with current Access training, can you summarize some of them for us...

Well, in my research and fieldwork, I've identified several inter-related issues. Let me try to briefly sketch out three of them: the technical emphasis, the brief and intensive workshops model, and briefly the pedagogical methods. These three issues are interconnected and link back to the technology transfer approach, which I feel is the most widely used model in access training today.

The Technical Emphasis

The technology transfer approach used in most current training programs seeks to facilitate community improvement by imparting technical knowledge and skill. Since Access training programs aim to enable the public to use media tools to circulate messages, certainly a significant portion of training should focus on developing a level of technical proficiency with production equipment. But unfortunately, technically oriented training alone does not translate into programs or processes that work to build and strengthen community. When it's unaccompanied by critical thinking about how to apply technology, technical training itself is ineffective in fostering community building. I always remember something that Greg Boozell said ...I don't have the exact quote but it was something like... "You can't assume that people can make interesting and important television without first knowing how to think critically about the medium, their communities, and their lives". He was a long time Access training specialist at Chicago Access Network.

Another shortcoming of the technical emphasis embodied in the technology transfer approach is that it makes areas critical to community building processes—such as public interaction, collective problem solving and collaboration—less important. Technology transfer tends to position trainers as experts and learners as tabula rasa: blank slates to be written upon. The trainer's primary role is to transfer her/his knowledge to trainees about how to use technology. The learner's primary role is to receive and absorb the knowledge for future use.

But, in the light of the Access mission—which I believe aspires to increase individual self-confidence, civic participation, public dialogue, and community self-awareness—this method is problematic. First, with this approach trainees do not have the opportunity to shape their own learning process to meet their learning styles or needs. Second, this approach does not support the development of critical thinkers, potentially hindering the trainees' ability to discover how media tools can be used to address their issues, cultures, or personal goals. And third, it doesn't support bringing to voice alternative opinions or perspectives perhaps counter to established ideas. It diminishes the likelihood for shared understanding of diverse points of view within the training session group as well as the community.

Next the 'Brief and Intensive Workshops' issue:

The current length and intensity of typical Access training programs can also work against delivering community-building outcomes. Because the skill and mastery of media production requires a good chunk of time and energy, most of the curriculum is dedicated to learning how to operate equipment in short training programs. As a result, little time and attention is devoted to principles and practices vital to stimulating participation, dialogue, critical inquiry, and community engagement.

For example, there is little time for activities which model and

support community building within the training, such as sharing personal experiences, debriefing exercises, and collaborating on projects. Brief, equipment-focused training also tends to exclude community television history, analysis of commercial media structure and influence, and critical viewing exercises—all of which develop critical perspective of the social context of communication. It often skips over engaging participants in a discussion about the civic context of their interests, or to ponder questions like "why have access to communications media? why is community media important? why use video at all to share local art and culture, create public dialogue or address local issues?" Without this kind of connection, learners typically do not have the opportunity to really grasp the community-building mission of the public access facility or the opportunities being presented to them. They don't connect with the social benefits of the Media Center's mission.

Another thing is that short, intense training classes are generally so content intensive that participants do not have enough time to absorb or practice what they have just learned. They suffer an information overload no matter how interesting or well delivered the content. It's no wonder then that trainers consistently report that trainees often do not feel confident with the equipment and/or do not come back after their training to make Access shows.

In short, the structure of these kinds of training programs—their brevity and intensity—do not serve the Access mission of building and strengthening community. They reinforce a focus on technical proficiency yet do not produce technically skilled community media users. What's worse, they exclude content areas and activities crucial to building community members' capacity to work collectively to examine public affairs, the role and influence of media, and the necessity of the services provided through community media centers.

And finally a bit about pedagogical methods.

The time constraints created by brief training programs, coupled with the emphasis on building individual technical knowledge and skill, cause Access trainers to employ lecture and demonstration as their main pedagogical methods. To be sure, these methods allow trainers to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time, control the learning process, and present practical applications of equipment. However, community education specialists see this combination of training strategies as problematic for many reasons. Let me quickly give you my top five:

- ▲ They emphasize one-way communication, "just learn the right buttons"
- ▲ Participants may not ask questions because of the size of the group, or time constraints, or the embarrassment of interrupting.
- ▲ They ignore varied learning styles of participants and limits creative and reflective learning and sharing.
- ▲ They endorse the authority figure concept, something that is counterproductive to a "culture" of democracy, and last but not least...
- ▲ Learning retention is very low—much is lost in 24 hours, and much of the rest is lost thereafter.

Lecture and demonstration, then, may not be the optimal teaching methods to promote critical thinking, self-confidence, collaboration, and civic participation (not to mention technical competency). In other words, they're not the most effective pedagogical strategies to create community-building skills aligned with

the Access mission.

Looking forward, what would be some of your suggestions to strengthen the field and movement through training?

Now there is a big and juicy question. If only we had pages we could fill! I guess to link back to some ideas we've covered, a couple of suggestions I'd make include:

- ▲ Create training programs that balance technology training and self-help approaches (this is already happening in several spots around the country);
- ▲ Conduct longer training programs, perhaps production/project based;
- ▲ Use a curriculum which can be easily modified to learners' needs and interests;
- ▲ Use a variety of pedagogical methods;
- ▲ Focus on activities that develop analysis, planning, and problem solving skills, whether you're doing critical viewing, production, or community screenings.

I'd also really like to see folks generate and test new models for training and report back on what they've discovered. Trainers are always tweaking their curriculum, adding to the repertoire of teaching tricks, and figuring out how to do what they do better. But they rarely have, or are encouraged to take time, to write up and present detailed findings. I think it would be extremely helpful to encourage or enable trainers to make time for this type of work and information exchange.

I'd also highly recommend that the Alliance find a way to more publicly and intentionally value the trainers. Although trainers are the frontline staff, the folks who work "in the trenches" on a day-to-day basis, they are usually treated a bit second class. Perhaps the Alliance could provide more professional development opportunities, especially training of trainers in key areas like facilitation, group dynamics, and popular education techniques. Or create a way for trainers to communicate best practices with one another on a regular basis, perhaps by bringing back and fully supporting the Trainers Special Interest Group and its publication *On Track* or setting up and managing a trainers listserv. Create a "trainer of the year" award to go alongside the June Ryan White, Sue Buske, George Stony, and Hometown awards to honor trainers for the important role they play at our centers and in the Access movement. I think any of those efforts would go all a long way toward building trainer's capacity (skills, knowledge, and attitude) and, as a result, the capacity of our centers to generate community activist-thinking and create programs that get back to the social change agenda at the core of our beginning.

Give us a pipe-dream to work towards...

My personal dream is that the Alliance launch a community media trainer's institute similar to the Community Media Leadership Institute¹ where trainers from around the country, maybe from around the world, could come together on an annual basis and engage in a structured and professional training of trainers workshop. At such an institute, trainers could gain a background in principles of community education and organizing, examine community media training case studies, have time to share tips and techniques, receive coaching while practicing new skills, and build networks among their peers for continued collaboration, information-sharing, and support. It would rock!

Any other last comments or parting shots?

Nope, just thanks for the opportunity to share my ideas on training and for including a piece on training in this important historical document.

Jesikah Maria Ross is currently working in South Africa, designing and developing participatory media training programs at Mediaworks, an NGO working to redress apartheid imbalances in both mainstream and community media. She can be reached at either jmross@ucdavis.edu or jesikah@new.co.za

1 The Community Media Leadership Institute (CMLI) is a five day program offered annually by The Learning Commons, a non-profit group made up of Alliance members and Access practitioners. It is an intensive, experiential learning workshop designed to foster visionary leadership in the community media field and promote the use of media tools for dialogue and community building.



Prescient & Prophetic

We are in the midst of a communications revolution that is bringing about a shift in our way of living that dwarfs our shift away from an agricultural to an industrial economy a century ago. Every means of work and relationships will undergo change: how we use energy, what jobs are available, what products we will be permitted to buy, how churches and other public organizations will conduct their affairs, even how we will live in families. But even our best experts on the workplace are unable to forecast what life will be like in two decades from now.

The dominant force for change is the marriage of electronic means of communication to the computer. A number of technologies that provided communication channels or handled information, and which were once individually distinct, have now been molded into a single whole. Telephones, satellites, television and radio, cable TV, microwave circuits and computers are now so interrelated that the difference between communications and computer services is impossible to distinguish.

— Rev. Dr. Everett C. Parker, at the 1982 NFLCP National Conference in St. Paul, MN

Honor & Admiration

I don't know if it means more to me to have been honored for the work with the organization I care so much about or to have received the award named after a good friend and a woman I so admire. (My term on the Board also lasted longer than my marriage, so do you think there's any chance we can get the 'Ireland' off the award?)



— Jan Leshner (Ireland), 1988 recipient of the Buske Leadership Award⁴

Reflections on Community Media Leadership Development

BY PAULA MANLEY

What have we learned about community media leadership development since the first pioneering community television organizations set up shop? Looking to the future, what do we need to focus on to strengthen leadership within the community media field?

Learning from experience. My community media story began in 1980 in Austin, Texas when I was a graduate student at the University of Texas in the Radio-TV-Film program. In my quest to produce a community-based documentary, I learned that the University did not allow new students to actually use the school's video gear. Even though I was paying big bucks for a "higher" education, I was told: "This is your first year in the program. You don't get access to the equipment until next year."

Lucky for me, someone told me that Austin Community Television made equipment available for projects like mine. I hopped on my bike and headed over to the ACTV office, which was housed in a bright yellow and green house above the Folk Toy store. After a few classes, I had access to field gear and a garage editing bay. A key was available for occasional overnight editing sessions. I was in heaven!

When a staff position came open at ACTV, I jumped at the opportunity. They needed a woman to balance the all-male staff and my undergraduate degree in journalism must have seemed mildly relevant. Within a few years, ACTV grew and I was "supervising" three people. I didn't know the first thing about leadership and unconsciously modeled the authoritarian concepts I associated with leaders. It was not a pretty picture.

In my documentary-making I had worked hard at bringing people together to share their stories, build self-confidence, and co-create a vision for the future through the process of making a videotape. But in my first official leadership position, I gave orders, asked few questions, and often overlooked the potential contributions of those I supervised. Assisted mainly by years of trial and error, I gradually learned that a collaborative leadership approach, which seeks to develop and engage everyone's potential, is essential within our organizations as well as within the communities we serve.

The case for leadership development. The environment for community media has become increasingly complex and challenging due to technological convergence, demographic changes, the Internet explosion, changes in cable franchising, changes in funding, and many other factors. Just as developing leadership through trial and error is not adequate for our times, over-reliance on a few "top" leaders within our community media organizations will no longer suffice. There is simply too much we need to know and too much to do!

To broaden our leadership base, including developing multiple leaders within our organizations, we must establish leadership development as a core value, create organizational cultures and practices that support leadership development, and assure the availability of leadership training and peer support within our field.

In our leadership development efforts I believe we should pay

special attention to involving people of color and young leaders. People of color, including established communities and more recent immigrants, have valuable leadership traditions (often rooted in collectivist cultural values) as well as unique perspectives on community needs that are often invisible to members of the dominant U.S. culture. Young leaders, especially those in their 20s to mid-30s, are energetic and technologically savvy; many are community service minded and eager for opportunities to lead.

The obvious rationale for attending to leadership development is that we need to grow the next generation of community media leaders (the baby boomers will not be around forever), but other issues are equally compelling:

▲ **Retaining Employees.** Although community media organizations are small and don't offer much "room for advancement," most jobs can be made more interesting. When employees are supported with professional development and are encouraged to take on new responsibilities, everyone benefits. Staff members become more skilled and productive, and life becomes more interesting. If professional development sounds "too expensive," do the math on the costs associated with recruiting and training new employees.

▲ **Preventing Executive Director Burnout.** Recent studies of nonprofit executives have confirmed what many in the trenches already knew. The demands on executive directors are enormous and, although these jobs are rewarding, burnout is a problem. With greater attention to staff leadership development, executive directors can share the load, operate in a less isolated manner, and have potential successors available without a national search for a new executive who is not rooted in the local community.

▲ **Improving Board Contributions.** Although boards of directors are charged with nothing less than governing our community media organizations, we often fall short in terms of board development. This includes orienting board members to their stewardship responsibilities, providing board training, and establishing means for board members to exert their influence in securing political and financial support for the organization. When we fail to engage board members in appropriate leadership activities, they often drop out or micro-manage programmatic activities.

▲ **Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness and National Impact.** Not surprisingly, a new study of high-performing nonprofit organizations by Paul Light, director of the Brookings Institution's Center for Public Service, finds leadership is an important key to organizational effectiveness. Nonetheless, leadership development remains a peripheral concern, rather than a central issue, for most community media organizations. If we're not actively developing community media leadership locally, it follows that our impact nationally will be limited.

Strengthening leadership development...

▲ **Within ourselves.** Leadership development is a lifelong process. Many excellent resources are available to guide the journey (I recommend *Learning to Lead: A Workbook on Becoming a Leader* by Warren Bennis and Joan Goldsmith). Everyone has the potential to grow as a leader and most of us are already leading in some aspect of our lives. What develops in leadership develop-

ment? Based on 30 years of research and practice, the Center for Creative Leadership boils it down to this: self-awareness, self confidence, and the abilities to view life from a systemic point of view, work in social systems, think creatively, and learn.

▲ **Within our community media organizations.** Leadership development may begin with the individual, but it is given expression through our participation in organizations. Making leadership development a central concern for an organization means incorporating it within planning efforts, resource allocation decisions and organizational systems (e.g. program development, fund development, board and staff development, advocacy campaigns, etc.). Related to the organization's formal systems, nurturing a "learning culture" is an important foundation for leadership development. In a learning organization, everyone is guided by a shared vision, people feel free to ask questions, new ideas are encouraged, information is widely available and people tend to see each other as resources.

▲ **Within our national movement.** Alliance for Community Media conferences and listservs help the community media field share information and stay connected. Although conference workshops contribute to leadership development (the upcoming Executive Directors in Training series looks like a wonderful addition to the national conference), a larger effort is needed. The National Alliance for Media Arts & Culture (NAMAC) and the Community Technology Centers Network (CTC-Net) are among the national member organizations that have made leadership development a priority in recent years—including successful fund raising to provide such things as training institutes in the field, dialogues on emerging issues, online salons, and technical assistance funds to help local member organizations enhance their capacity.

Looking back and looking ahead.

Although the availability of community access television is often attributed to early FCC actions, the federal Communications Act, or local cable franchising, community media outlets owe their

existence first and foremost to community-based leadership and grassroots organizing. Community activism almost always precedes public interest provisions within public policy. This is as true today as it was in the early 1970s when the first community television operations were founded, and the 1980s when most of the major U.S. cities were wired for cable.

In nearly 30 years of community media practice, developing people has been at the heart of our work in local communities. We have seen that as people tell their own stories, engage in dialogue with others, and develop a public voice, they come to know themselves and their communities better. As knowledge, skills and confidence develop, so does the capacity to enact social change—not only through community media involvement but also through endeavors such as running for public office, teaching, direct action, or volunteering in other organizations.

As a movement, and guided by the pioneering efforts of the Alternate Media Center and the NFLCP (now Alliance), we have succeeded in opening up public spaces and staking a community claim in the vast and largely commercialized television system. We have enhanced media literacy and fostered community knowledge creation with appreciation for the voices at the margins, as well as "legitimate" stakeholders, within the social fabric. We have undertaken experiments with the Internet and the emerging multi-media environment. In many communities, we have secured significant public financing and created organizations—even institutions—which have become well rooted in place. The next leg of the community media journey will require many more leaders and a sustained commitment to leadership development.

Paula Manley is co-founder of the Community Media Leadership Institute and the former executive director of Tualatin Valley Community Access in Oregon. Her tenure on the NFLCP national board (1991-1993) included facilitating the organization's name change to the Alliance for Community Media. She can be reached at paulam@easystreet.com.

THE NEXT STAGE OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

FROM ►

Few leaders, leaders at the top.

Leading through goal setting and tight control.

Seeking efficiency, benchmarking for low-cost, high-quality services.

Leading by allocating scarce resources.

Being reactive and adapting to change.

Designing hierarchical organizations.

Directing staff and volunteers.

Having information held by a few decision-makers.

The leader as boss, controlling processes and behaviors.

The leaders as stabilizer, balancing conflicting demands and maintaining the status quo.

The leader is responsible for good administration.

► TO

Many leaders, leaders at every level, including volunteers.

Leading through creating shared visions.

Seeking effectiveness, creating domains of uniqueness and distinctive competencies.

Leading by creating strategic alliances and new resources.

Anticipating change and co-creating the future.

Designing flatter, distributed, more collegial organizations.

Empowering & inspiring staff and volunteers, facilitating group work.

Having information shared widely internally and with outside partners.

Leaders as coaches, creating learning communities.

Leaders as change agents, creating agendas, balancing risks and evolving the culture.

Leaders are also responsible for developing other leaders.

Source: Adapted from Burt Nanus, 1999

The Future Ain't What She Used To Be

Electronic Mail by 1982: The Postal Service announced in November [1978], that it was beginning to test transmission of mail by electronic impulses and satellites. The service would convert messages to electronic impulses and send them almost instantaneously. Once they reached their destination, the messages would be reconverted to printed form and delivered with the next day's mail.

—Paige Amidon, *NFLCP Newsletter*,
Winter 1978

Communications technologies consultant Ted Conant stated video discs will give prerecorded tape 'a run for its money,' while discussing hardware in the home video market at a new technologies session at the National Convention.

In test markets the video disc has had good consumer acceptance citing the freeze-frame and single frame advance features as selling points. Conant predicted the home movie industry would be dead within five years.

While quality and reliability increase, the price is going down on large TV screens. Christmas 1980 is a target date to flood the market. Stereo television sound is coming. Within five years, there will be digital television cameras, he projected.

—CTR, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1980

The most common baud rates in use today are 300, 1200 and 2400. In practical terms this means the transmitting of about 30, 120 and 240 characters (letters or numbers) per second. Many older and less expensive modems operate at 300 baud. The current standard on most public bulletin boards is 1200 baud, while most of the more expensive commercial services run at 1200 and 2400 baud. As higher speed modems become less expensive and fast data transmission becomes less susceptible to interference, the speed will probably increase.

—Leigh Caskey, *CTR*, February/March 1988

The future ain't what she used to be.

—Marshall McLuhan, 1979 *National Cable Television Association* conference

What's in a Name?

'You will remember that he suggested EIEIO last year, though no one can remember what it stood for.'

Almost from the beginning in 1976, the name National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) evoked debate among members. Jokes aside about any affiliation with the National Football League, or the Communist Party, the federation in the NFLCP reflected the zeitgeist in which it was born. It certainly described what it was all about. Federations were the rage, maybe not unlike the use of the word Alliance today. There was the model of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, and the Federation this and Federation that.

"The debate (perennial) to change the name of the NFLCP to something more memorable was simply not the same without Garrett McCarey," wrote Sue Benarczyk in a 1981 *Community Television Review* article, "You will remember that he suggested EIEIO last year, though no one can remember what it stood for."

It was another ten years before the name was finally changed, however. At the 1991 conference in Portland, Oregon, conferees were invited to submit their suggestions for a new organizational name.

Alliance members had moved beyond only local cable programming. The internet was dawning and technology was offering new promises and perils at a dizzying speed. The marriage of computer and television was consummated. It wasn't just about empowerment through television anymore, it was about building community through media.

The name Alliance for Community Media, which, if I may say so, was a suggestion of mine, wasn't even among the finalists. Whether others also suggested that name, I never knew.

The final survivors in the initial name game were: Alliance for Community Television (ACT),

Community Media Alliance (CMA), Public Access Media Alliance (PAMA), Public Eye (PE), and Public Voice (PV). All told some 188 names were suggested by members, spawning some interesting acronyms, such as ACTION, ALIVE, CAMP, CIA, EMPOWER, FCC, FOCUS, MAD, MAGNET, NAP, NCAA, OASIS, PLANET, POT, POWER, PROMPT, SOAP, SPAM, TALC, VIDEO, VISION, VOICE and WOCHIT.

The Alliance for Community Media name was a compromise when the board's first choice, Community Media Alliance, was discovered to already be taken.

My only problem with the name was the acronym, ACM. It sounded like a military missile to me, still does, like an ICBM or ABM or SAM, but then, I grew up during the cold war. Usage rules were adopted, such as using "Alliance" instead of the acronym, though outside of the pages of *Community Media Review* (this issue excepted), it's seldom observed today. I take solace that the US military had a missile oxymoronically called the Peacekeeper. Maybe it meant the Alliance for Community Media.

Community media does indeed help keep the peace in a pluralistic society. When everyone has a voice, understanding is possible. It is no small mission, one that I'm proud to have been associated with for 20 years now. And almost ten years into the "new" name, no one today is clamoring to change it.

And EIEIO? For the record, it stood for Educational and Independent Electronic Imagemakers Organization. As Garrett McCarey recently recalled, 'The advantages are that it is precisely descriptive of our members, it's easy to remember, and we already have a theme song.'

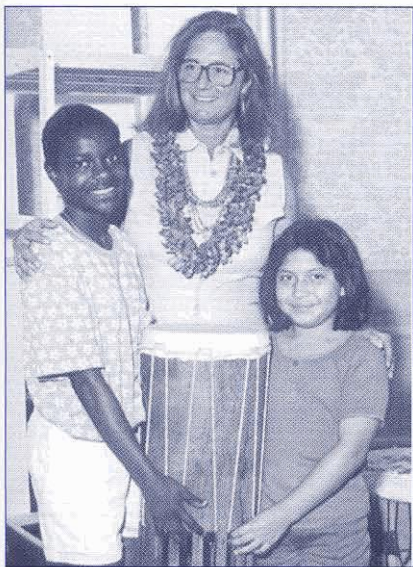
Maybe next time.

—Tim Goodwin



The Story of Kia'i I Kaleo

Every organization needs its traditions. When the Alliance adopted its new name, it also adopted a new symbol, that most universal sign of communication between people since time immemorial — the drum. Two years after the name change, the Alliance's 1994 annual conference was held in Honolulu, Hawaii. And it was there that the physical embodiment of the symbol was created after a Polynesian custom and first presented on behalf of community media activists in Hawaii to Boston, site of the 1995 conference. The pahu has traveled from conference to conference each year since as a source of support, unity and focus, until the event returns to Hawaii and Kia i I Kaleo returns home for good. A tradition had been born.



Kia i I Kaleo's first stop was Boston for the 1995 conference, shown here with Conference Chair Rika Welsh and local kids.

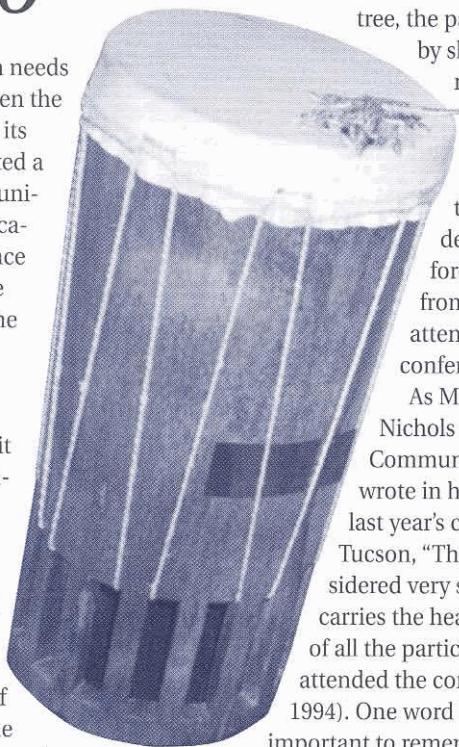
Kia'i I Kaleo, as the drum, or pahu, is named in Hawaiian, means "protector of the voice," echoing the theme of that 1994 conference — Protect the Voice, Perpetuate the Vision — "Kia'i I Kaleo e ho 'omau ke aka" and the full name of the drum. It is fittingly a symbol of perseverance against all odds.

Made from the trunk of a coconut tree, the pahu is covered by shark skin and rubbed with kukui nut oil or linseed oil to preserve the wood. It derives its life force and energy from those attending Alliance conferences.

As Meredith Nichols of 'Olelo Community Television wrote in her handout at last year's conference in Tucson, "The Pahu is considered very spiritual (It carries the hearts and minds of all the participants who attended the conference from 1994). One word that is very important to remember when dealing with Kia i I Kaleo is "Pono" (righteous, a higher awareness, being centered with yourself and your environment). To be centered is to be at peace with yourself, within your work space, with your creator and with mother nature. A higher awareness is knowing what the Pahu is carrying spiritually and respecting that which it carries. The righteous person has balance in his life between himself and his creator and has no animosity with his fellow man or beast. This is the people that should pass and receive Kia'i I Kaleo."

It will pass this year from Washington, DC, which received it last year from Tucson to Houston, site of the 2002 conference.

—Tim Goodwin



Kia'i I Kaleo

When passing Kia'i I Kaleo to the next site
Ha'i Olelo (the home of Kia'i I Kaleo)

*'O Ko 'olau Ka mauna
'O Wahiawa ka pu 'u
'O Waikiki Ke Kai
'O Kamehameha Ke Kanaka
Mai Ka lae O kaimana
a ka lae O Kaena
'O Ka 'aina O O 'ahu
Aloha Kaua*

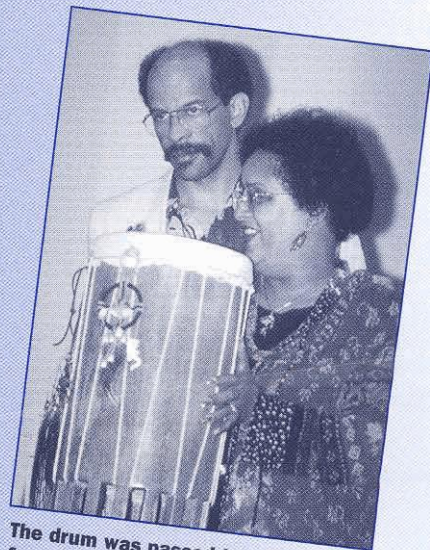
*We should say this to establish the
land from which the Pahu came.*

Receiving site

*E Ho 'omai e Kia 'i I Kaleo
e ho 'omau ke aka.
Kia 'i I Kaleo e Ho 'omau ke aka.*

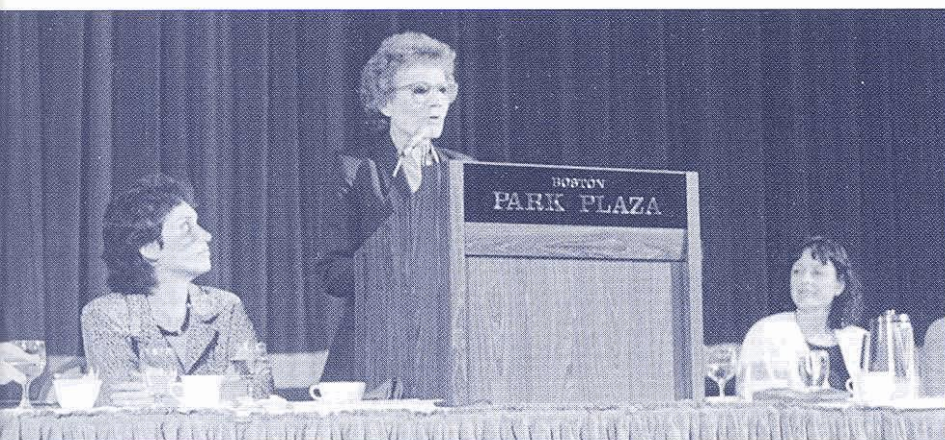
*The Home of Kia 'i I Kaleo
The Mountain of Ko 'olau
The Hill of Wahiawa
The Beach of Waikiki
The man of Kamehameha
From Diamond Head
to Kaena Point
This is the land of O'ahu
I greet you.*

*Please come protect the voice
and perpetuate the vision.*



The drum was passed to Milwaukee for the 1997 national conference, shown here with Milwaukee's Vel Wiley and Richard Turner of Hawaii.

IN REMEMBRANCE



ROXIE COLE

"We are not market share! – We are the community!"

While looking through materials to write these words about Roxie, the Robert Frost quote about choosing "...the path less traveled" kept reappearing. While I believe it is an appropriate analogy for Roxie, the image Frost's poem conjures in my mind is of a diverging path in the woods, near a Walden Pond, or some bucolic pastoral setting. The path Roxie choose was a world away from that contemplative metaphor. Her's was a path of action, a calling to 'roll-up-your-sleeves' and join the fray. Roxie got things done. Roxie got *you* to get things done. She started Access 30 Dayton in 1977 on a shoe string, and remained director until her retirement in 1990. Her undying commitment to her access community in Dayton, Ohio and to the NFLCP was infectious. She sat on the national boards of the NFLCP, and of the Alliance for Communication Democracy.

The initial involvement of so many wonderfully talented people, who have grown into very important leadership roles in the Alliance and the community media movement today, can be directly attributed to Roxie's finely tuned genius for motivating, without a trace of 'bossiness.'

She knew her own mind and acted upon it. Her frank expression of her viewpoints led to many heated board discussion, but that too was infectious. She would sit at the back of the boardroom, smoking her Pall Malls (yes we did tolerate smoking in our meetings back

then!)...She once described herself saying "I'm just the bitch in the back of the room, keeping all you boys on track." And she did! Roxie walked the talk!

Roxie had that fine quality of one who has grown to know oneself. She understood the inherent truth in situations and acted upon it. There are so many entertaining stories of Roxie standing her ground, and doing so with the strength of wit and humor.

To me Roxie personified a life force. Often, when two or more of us gather, the conversation will drift to Roxie. Having known her, having lost her, experiencing her ongoing influence on the work we do, I realize that I have learned a valuable piece of wisdom through my friendship with Roxie, something I deeply value. Once a voice sings out its own unique song, with the truth and valor of self expression, it never falls silent. Roxie is profoundly missed by many of us, but she is far from gone.

– Rika Welsh

PEGGY GILBERTSON

Peggy Gilbertson, who helped to make Channel 20 in Knoxville a model of the best in Public Access, was a housewife and former school teacher with no formal training in television. In

1978, as a dedicated church worker, a doctor's wife and perennial volunteer for good causes, she took a space in the St. John's Episcopal Church and began creating what over the years became a com-



munications hub attracting dozens of groups and hundreds of volunteers.

When refranchising time came around, Peggy and her forces were ready both technically and politically to negotiate for a model Access agreement. A non-profit was established and access in Knoxville was off and running with the additional resources to make it successful. Peggy's innovative approach to training quickly became a model for the NFLCP. Her downright practicality and good humor was both persuasive and infectious.

It is the ultimate tribute that during her long illness there was no letup at Channel 20. Her small and dedicated staff increased on-air time from 43 to 63 hours per week. She died in October 1988.

paraphrased from a George Stoney tribute

BILL RUSHTON

When I first meet Bill Rushton in New Orleans in 1970, he was managing editor of the *View Carre Courier*. He had recently graduated from Tulane School of Architecture. In 1973 he talked one of the local independent TV stations into providing a half-hour a month for a program that looked at the impact of development. My first production experience was working on these programs. During this time Cox attempted to get a license from the New Orleans City Council, but was blocked by student activists at Tulane. The Cox proposal had no provisions for PEG, and the council was convinced not to grant it. So Bill was the first to utilize local TV in New Orleans, but not through PEG Access.

Bill moved to New York in 1978 to write *The Cajuns: From Acadiana to Louisiana*, published by Farah, Strauss & Giroux. Following publication, he leaped into the PEG Access community. Bill was part of the staff that developed a proposal for the national labor unions to launch the Satellite Public Interest Network (SPIN).

The late '70s were not only the beginning of the Cable Wars, but were also the first efforts at telecommunications planning. With Bill's experience and background in New Orleans, the Tri-State Planning Commission with an NTIA grant launched Project Metrolink, to identify telecommunication resources in Northern New Jersey, New York City, Westchester County and Southwestern Connecticut to determine the best way to create a region-

al interconnect for PEG Access. The Reagan Administration came in and eliminated funding for all regional planning agencies.

Bill's work was not to be wasted. He went to work for the New York & New Jersey Port Authority implementing their earliest information technology and telecommunications efforts, which included info retrieval kiosks in the train stations, airports and the World Trade Center, fiber through the tunnels to create the first Teleport, a term that Bill invented.

Bill's death in 1986 was not only a great loss to the access community, but to those who knew him and know how excited and involved he would be in making sure that people and their needs were foremost in the design and development of our evolving technology environment.

— Chuck Sherwood

HERB SCHILLER

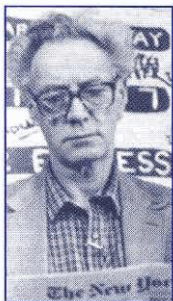
Herb Schiller was the founding "reader" of Paper Tiger Television. Sitting in front of a subway backdrop, he held forth on the evils of, in his words, "the steering mechanism of the ruling class", i.e. the *New York Times*. It was a perfect fit: Herb's Brooklyn accent and the painted subway; his acerbic humor and the august publication itself; Herb's dignified decorum and our rag tag scruffy production chaos.

Herb told it like it is. He was not afraid of words like imperialism and hegemony. When he wrote *The Mind Managers* in the early '70s, he foresaw the media moguls and mergers which now dominate the headlines and our lives. Around the world this book was welcomed (and is still in print in many languages) as a key insight into systems of cultural control. Many felt that power, but until Herb, no one had clearly articulated the problems. The movement for community media needs to be grounded in a critique of the corporate information industry. Herb provided that critique with a clarity and force.

His last book, *Living in the Number One Country*, published by Seven Stories Press gives a unique look into the man's personal life: his childhood during the depression and his work under the Marshall Plan in Europe after the Second World War.

A prophet has a problem in his own country, the mainstream liberal communications studies in the U.S. never gave Herb his due. But his work is translated into many languages. He was known and respected by journalists and scholars from all over the world, and his work continues to delineate the dimensions of the major obstacle to peace and justice in our time: the commodification of information.

— DeeDee Halleck



FROM PAPER TIGER'S ROAR.

The First Amendment Is About Diversity

BY RICHARD TURNER

What is it about Public Access that keeps those of us who are concerned about racism, oppression and justice involved in a movement started more than twenty five years ago? There are plenty of opportunities or ways to get involved in things that change our communities. Why does or should community media or the medium of public access, continue to have us demanding improvements such as more, better or easier? Why must we continue to be vigilant about federal, state and local policy regarding Public Access?



We continue the struggle for Public Access because of our fundamental need to preserve, enhance and sustain diversity.

Perhaps you thought of the First Amendment as our guarantor of Free Speech. But far more fundamental and perhaps unwitting of the Constitution's authors, is the concept of ensuring diversity. Establishing diversity of thought, expression, spiritual conviction and the ability to redress grievances as a fundamental right, implies heterogeneity. We find throughout history instances where there was increased diversification there was a dramatic increase in human development. A society that is homogenous, that is not expected to be diverse in thought, expression, etc., would be severely limited and really incapable of attaining diversity.

Here is where we find commonality with the need to eliminate racism and oppression that acts to suppress and even eliminate diversity. Freedom of religion and freedom of speech ensure diversity and therefore are the means to an end. Where there is freedom to think freely, to express freely, to associate freely guarantees that we live in a society that tolerates and accepts fundamental differences.

So, the next time you are presenting the concepts of Public Access, or think you are exercising your right to free speech, remember...you are really engaging in an act which is designed to ensure diversity in a pluralist society where we are equally concerned about protecting the differences as we are with unification.

Richard Turner is currently the Equal Opportunity Chair on the Alliance national board. Contact him at Communivision@hawaii.rr.com

The Importance of Access

Listening to proponents of community television talk about the scrappy genre of cable programming is like listening to the herds of beaming revolutionaries in Eastern Europe reminisce about the crumbling of the Berlin Wall. In fact, public accessites say the recent uprisings ringing the globe point to the very reason such channels are important.

— Lisa Stern, *Cablevision*, 15 January 1990



International Perspectives

REPORTS ON COMMUNITY MEDIA FROM ABROAD

As we begin the 21st century there is no doubt that community media has caught fire around the globe. We are happy to include some international perspectives on this movement from some of our long-time overseas collaborators.

INROADS IN NEPAL

BY SALLIE FISCHER

I am thousands of miles from America, in Nepal. This country, one of the poorest in the world, has known democracy for just eleven years. Until the revolution in 1990, Nepal had one newspaper, one radio station, and one television station—each was government-owned. His Majesty's Government determined what information the people of Nepal should receive, for it knew, as we all do, that information is power.

The notion of community media, or any alternative to government-controlled

They will use whatever technology is at their disposal—word of mouth, the Internet, and everything in between—to disseminate that information.

media for that matter, was nearly inconceivable in Nepal. Any effort to communicate alternative views was shut down immediately. But information can be controlled just so far.

Sooner or later it somehow manages to seep through. And when it does, those who are denied their fundamental human rights will grab it and run with it. They will use whatever technology is at their disposal—word of mouth, the Internet, and everything in between—to disseminate that information. Governments that fail to recognize this do so at their own peril. Witness the 1990 revolution in Nepal, or the generally unsuccessful efforts of several Asian governments to control the flow of information via the Internet today.

The community media movement in the United States is part of a long tradition of people around the world fighting for the open flow of information. Community media can be exciting (remember live coverage of the Seabrook, New Hampshire nuclear power controversy?) or boring (city council meetings, anyone?). It may be

extremely distasteful (the white power movement comes to mind). But it is always important and relevant because it is first and foremost about the rights of access to information and freedom of opinion.

Throughout the world today people have access to information and information technology like never before. Even in remote, poverty-stricken Nepal, where barely a third of the adult population is literate, anyone who can takes advantage of Internet access. The inefficient state-run telephone company is losing revenue because Nepalis have discovered that long distance phone calls via the Internet cost next to nothing. The Maoist party uses a web site to support its "People's War" against government corruption and inattention to the needs of the poor. The work of Nepali artisans can now be purchased at fair prices through web sites run by organizations dedicated to community enterprise and fair trade. Nepalis are using chat rooms, list serves, and web sites to communicate about every topic imaginable. And I'm sitting here at my computer in Kathmandu, about to send this across 11 time zones to America. It is impossible to conceive that any government in Nepal will ever be able to control the flow of information again.

Few people using the Internet would ever think of themselves as part of the community media movement, but in fact, they are. Every elementary class, city government, and non-profit organization web site in the world is a 21st century manifestation of the movement that saw us using community radio, cable and low-powered TV, and alternative newspapers—only the technology has changed. The fact that so many people now take for granted their right to send and receive information via the Internet should be celebrated by those who believe in and have fought for access.

The struggle has by no means ended, however. Billions of people around the world (and that includes America) remain voiceless and are denied access to information because of poverty and oppression. Communities everywhere still have

local problems to deal with. Schools don't have adequate resources. Artists need outlets for their work. Non-profit organizations have to raise money. Commercial forces and governments still want control.

Communications technology by itself cannot eliminate the problems facing our planet, but it can be a powerful tool to inform and to move us to action. And today it is faster, cheaper, and easier to use than ever before. We have even fewer excuses to get out there and use it. And just as many reasons as ever to defend against commercialization, co-optation, and those who would deny people's rights to information and free speech. Get out your old Led Zeppelin albums folks—"the song remains the same."

Sallie Fischer has been teacher of English as a Second Language; editor, of various magazines for tourists, freelance consultant for management, communications, fundraising to international non-government organizations working in economic development, the environment, and girl trafficking. She is presently general manager of Wild Earth, a private business producing herbal products, working primarily with community enterprises in remote, economically fragile mountain communities. She is married to Buddha Limbu (a rafting and trekking guide) and has a 7-year-old son, Matthew.

THINKING GLOBALLY

BY ALAIN AMBROSI

As I write these lines, the second Peoples Summit of the Americas held in Québec City has decided to integrate into the Alternatives for the Americas document a special chapter on communication. This chapter—while denouncing the concentration of media and communication industries and the threats that it represents for democracy and cultural pluralism—calls for the respect of the inalienable right to communicate. It demands the creation of enabling conditions for concretizing this right, free of State and corporate constraints and censorship by any individual collective entity from Tierra de Fuego to Alaska. This decision is more than symbolic when put in the context of the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas negotiations, held since 1994 by the heads of state with

no consultation of civil society.

This statement is also important because it affirms that a social and democratic communication agenda exists to confront the commercial logic that prevails in the final declaration of the Heads of States. This official declaration focuses only on connectivity to the NICT as the universal answer to the continental problems of poverty, development and democracy. But the human logic consists in the social appropriation of these technologies to put them at the heart of an active civic participation in social and democratic processes in the whole continent. Issued by the Hemispheric Social Alliance (including representatives of unions, popular and environmental organizations, women's groups, indigenous, peasant, student associations, human rights organizations, church and international solidarity groups), this declaration also reflects the long struggles led by the community media organizations and their national, regional and international networks to put the right to communicate on the agenda of social emancipation at a global level.

We all know that community media existed long before the corporate interests took control of the mass media and that it still continues to be one of the only peoples' alternative voices in the neoliberal environment where information is a mere commodity and the citizen a consumer.

It is less well known, however, that these same democratic media began to create international networks and were making themselves heard world-wide from the late 1980s. At the very moment that states and their international institutions were withdrawing from the field of information and were leaving it wide open for the multinationals (following, for example, the withdrawal of the US and Britain from UNESCO), these democratic media networks took over the notion of the right to communicate, advocating the right to access to and participation in the production of information, communication and knowledge. In the late 1990s, networks of practitioners such as AMARC (radio), Vidéazimut (TV) and APC (computers) came together with groups of researchers (such as the MacBride Round Table) and other organisations such as WACC (churches) and Article 19 (information rights), to create a network of networks



and put forward a common strategy. For five years now, these new cross-cutting networks have been carrying out joint initiatives for mass education and lobbying within intergovernmental organisations. Of particular interest are the adoption of a popular charter of communications (www.pccharter.net/), a working group created within the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) (www.comunica.org/itu-ngo/) and a joint platform to develop a global movement for democratic communications (comunica.org/v21/statement.htm).

Since late 1999, this movement has been collaborating with the initiatives of the anti-globalisation movement and been present along with the Independent Media Centers emerging international movement at many different events like Porto Alegre and now Quebec. Today many more organizations have endorsed the Peoples' Communication Charter. May that last meeting in Québec be another step in the setting up of a real democratic alternative agenda for global communication.

For details on the different organizations see: <http://www.comunica.org/v21/>

THOUGHTS FROM BRAZIL

BY JULIO WAINER

Just before I left for a research trip to US in 1990, a major newspaper in Brazil attacked the weird idea of elected mayor Luiza Erundina to establish local television in São Paulo, a city of eleven million inhabitants. The publication took the figures from an open channel network, *TV Manchete*, and applied them to Erundina's idea.

This single fact shows how distant the idea was for an inexpensive TV. Although radio has been popular since the early '20s, and alternative press played an important role in fighting dictatorship, TV was taken as a machine for the establishment, which could only be costly, therefore available to maintain power structures.

People didn't realize it, but they were playing the game of Globo network, helped by many (good) professional film/video producers, who argued that TV is expensive and can only be implemented seriously with "quality" equipment. The concept of quality, what is meant by quality, has been discussed very little in Brazil. Instead of "quality" criticism, "quality" structure and narrative, "quality" ideas, the idea of expensive equipment without

which no one could do relevant production has dominated.

Thanks to George Stoney's efforts, I was granted a Fulbright grant to travel the US for six months, to research Community TV and social documentaries. The cornerstone for my schedule was to be NFLCP's (what's that!) annual conference, that would take place in Washington DC. That fancy hotel didn't fit much with my previous impressions of George's way of living and the idea of community activism. But that was the starting point of my tour.

And so it happened.

For the following months I visited several media centers in about fifteen different states. I had no idea that for my itinerary, George would pick up the telephone and make arrangements. People—wonderful people—used to pick me up in the airport and lodge me in their homes. I got a very different overview of the United States than even the most dedicated tourist would have had. When possible, I reciprocated in the form of workshops showing daring independent videos from Brazil, or just filming for the local TV productions.

Back in Brazil, I dedicated myself to spreading the word about the projects and powerful ideas I had seen in US. In the same way I had been greeted, I understood that a positive exchange would occur through warm contact among people.

Over the last ten years, we had the opportunity to bring people from community media in US—like George, DeeDee Halleck, Dirk Koning, and Jon Alpern, to develop programs that establish very different exchange possibilities among Brazilians and North Americans. Other Brazilians have gone to the US, and the idea of community media is understood by many more now.

Besides critical thinking, the power of media can also be fought through examples for grassroot shows and inexpensive relevant production. Although equipment is cheaper than ever, we haven't exercised our training tools and production skills enough. Overwhelmed by so-many hours to fill on Access channels, I saw very little concerns about improving quality of existing TV production.

I would like to see in US community media centers more discussion about video making. How to structure a message efficiently? How to use a camcorder as a pen? How to employ the viewfinder as an extension of your eye? How to identify diversity through calligraphy, in age, gender or eth-

nic groups? What's a desirable pacing to minimally entertain your audience? What's the grammar for video language?

There are many lessons that can be taken from Hollywood multi-million dollar film productions, where a hundred minutes costs more than a whole facility for community TV.

For many of us, a passion for moving images was the beginning of our activism. We should take care of this flame and apply some efforts to improve the capacity of others to deliver beauty, truths, and faith through images. This might be one key to perpetuating the principles of Community TV.

Julio Wainer is an independent media producer, who has been working with George Stoney on a documentary about pedagogy theorist Paulo Freire.

MAKING GAINS IN KOREA

BY MYOUNG JOON KIM

After 10 years of struggle and lobbying for public access, finally Korea became one of the significant places where the public access structure has been introduced to every part of the broadcasting systems, although obstacles still remain inside and outside of the movement for media democracy.

The story dates back two years when the new broadcasting law passed in the congress. While the law reflects the world-

wide trend of Neo-liberalism, it includes important articles on compulsory public access structures, within the national public broadcasting system (KBS), cable TV, and to be included in a new satellite broadcasting systems (KDB), which will air at the end of this year.

Based on this legal development and the inauguration of our own "Alliance for Public Access," which includes most NGOs (nonprofit organizations), trade unions and Association of Korean Independent Film and Vidoemakers (KIFV)—new struggle has begun. We are in a very critical moment, maybe a very historical moment not just in the Korean context, because finally the national public broadcaster KBS began a 30 minute weekly access program (Saturday 4:30 PM) two weeks ago and other cable access programs are being

broadcast in some regions. Also within two weeks, a new satellite public access channel will get a license. Everywhere, things are happening very fast!

Facilities and training programs for the public were not mentioned in the law, therefore the activists have started to campaign for the issue of establishing the media center around the country. As a result of this activity, finally the Korean Film Commission (KFC) decided to fund the Independent media center in Seoul for 'indie' producers and public access producers. The government is now also considering the plan to establish regional media center all around the country.

Though still suffering from the lack of more massive involvement and the insufficient number of the advocacy activists along with the prevalent power of conservative government officials, the movement for public access in Korea has already stepped forward to the next level. This development would not have been possible without the help of American public access activists like Bunnie Riedel and Dirk Koning and everyone of you who made public access a real thing. It would have been far more difficult to get to this stage, especially concerning the lobby for the legislation, had there been no public access movement in the United States. It has always been used as a case study whenever there is a big discussion related to the introduction of new structure.

Information is power and solidarity is our lethal weapon.

Myoung Joon Kim is a long time media activist in Korea and has been in the forefront of starting media centers there. He also has served on the board of Videazimut.

GLOBAL VILLAGE, BUT...

BY RUUD DE BRUIN

Last year's conference in Tucson, Arizona: The morning shuttle from The Westward Look to the conference hotel. As always I was dressed in black. "Are you from New York" a female fellow conferee informed kindly. "No" I replied "I'm from Amsterdam, Europe" (The Netherlands sometimes takes too much time to explain).

Did it really matter, I wondered later, contemplating her remark. Not in a literal sense anyway, both are major world cities. Yes, and the inhabitants of both cities are looked upon as different (to describe it mildly) by their compatriots.

Also in another sense it didn't matter. The endless legal fights with legislators, cable companies, nosy city councils, First Amendment fighters. The never-ending search for funding.

It isn't that different on both sides of the Atlantic.

Here in the Netherlands, OLON (an organization similar to the Alliance), faces quite the same problems as the Alliance, sometimes even with the same (globally operating) companies. It's hard to imagine that only in a few countries of the European Community is access common or on a very small scale. Not in Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Norway, Finland and hardly getting by in Great Britain and Ireland.

A history of government interference inhibits the rapid development of access in most European countries. It's even worse in the new member countries from behind the former Iron Curtain. So the prospects aren't that good for access in Europe. Countries with larger scale access like The Netherlands, Sweden and Germany have used the era between government interference in the media and the rising of the large media conglomerates to build access.

It is to be feared that the countries I mentioned earlier don't have that luxury. So they will depend on legislation, which comes more and more from Brussels (The seat of the EC administration), which is heavily influenced by lobbying from the same companies.

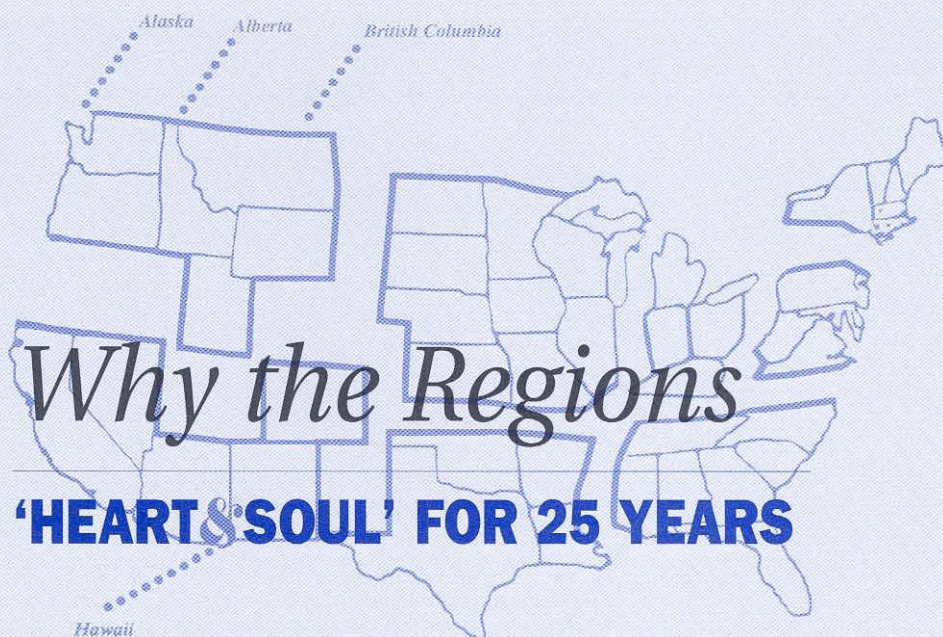
Well, enough of this. You all have got a party to celebrate. The Alliance is 25 years old! And a lovely maiden she is. Alas I won't be able to attend this party as I did in Washington, DC before, Milwaukee, Cincinnati and Tucson. OLON has chosen this year for a budget deficit, so no foreign conferences. Which leaves me to congratulate the Alliance, the board and all its members with this year's jubilee conference (and of course you Bunnie, give 'em hell).

Ruud de Bruin is a media producer and board member of OLON, the Dutch equivalent of the Alliance. He has served on the Alliance International Committee.



A history of government interference inhibits the rapid development of access in most European countries.

After 10 years of struggle and lobbying for public access, finally Korea became one of the significant places where the public access structure has been introduced...



In the beginning...the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP), which later became the Alliance for Community Media (the Alliance), focused its attention in the development of a national organization by dividing the country into seven regions. The key to regional activities has always been the people willing to roll up their sleeves and work for what they believe in...so, it is no surprise that Regions were clustered around people, active hard working people who had just become new members. (note: Vol 1 No 1 *NFLCP Newsletter*, June 1977) Right from the beginning it was recognized that the regions should "develop, each in its own unique way." They stayed closely in touch with one another, reporting their activities regularly in column on Regional Reports in every *Newsletter*. This was a very important organizing tool for that early growth and development, one that could still be useful today. The seven original regions soon grew and shifted into nine and then re-grouped to eight in the late 1990s. My own region was once split into being part of the Midwest, Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions simultaneously and sometime in the late '70's became the Central States Region.

There have been bleak days in the national office, periods when there was no national office. Times when there was no executive director. The regional structure has sustained this organization in times of crisis. People from the regional leadership have stepped forward and saved the day.

Twenty-five years have passed, and the regions and the Alliance, still exist. We have changed size, shape, and composition. Regional chairs and regional boards have come and gone,

but the structure and strength of what we do within our regions remain. What is it that these regions of the Alliance provide, that transcends beyond conferences and regional video awards and has fostered the continuation of these "mini" organizations within the Alliance? Is it providing a forum for our membership to gather on a smaller, more intimate scale? Is it creating a structure for chapters to form in states and cities? Is it better access to state legislators because of our localism and geographic proximity?

I think you know the answer.

The following pages only briefly describe the evolution of the eight regions of the Alliance for Community Media. From these pages, one will understand why some of us consider the regions to be the "heart and soul" of this organization. We gather as regional groups as frequently as time, logistics, and budgets allow. We come together, just as the first regional coordinators did, to learn, disseminate information, to share in defeats and glories, and most important of all, to share of ourselves in friendships that change lives.

The Annual International Conference and *Hometown USA* provide an opportunity to show our strength as a national movement. Our power, drawn from our communities and from the knowledge that we are one of the few protecting the media environment from being completely controlled by mega-corporations, really gets played out on the local level.

The Alliance may seem like a small grassroots organization on a national scale, but on the regional level we truly find out how large we are...and we are still growing!

— Erik Möllberg, *Region Chair of Chairs*

MNN Salutes

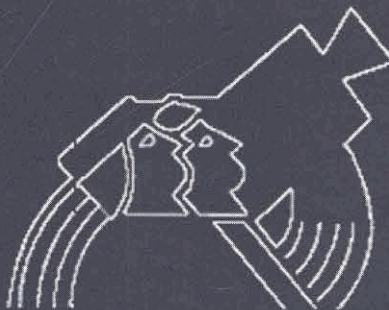
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NORTHEAST

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont

BY REGIONAL CHAIR **CHUCK SHERWOOD**

The Northeast Region has its roots in the cable access movement. The region has had its struggles from state to state. Development can be marked by achievements, town by town. So it is difficult to determine which events define the history of the region when each community could easily select different events that influenced their development.

The late '60s saw media activists in New York City organize and lobby for access to cable channels when Manhattan was in the process of granting its first cable franchise. Fred Friendly of CBS chaired the committee that recommended that the license set aside PEG channels and provide funding for operating and capital for an access management corporation. The Manhattan franchise, granted in August of 1970, was the first in America to require PEG access channels.

In 1971 one of the first Access centers in America was established by George Stoney, fresh from having run the *Challenge for Change* program for the Canadian Film Board, and Red Burns, with whom he co-founded the Alternate Media Center (AMC) at NYU. The LaGuardia Place Center provided equipment and training that produced some of the programming that launched Public Access Channel C on July 3, 1971.

1971 also saw the first New Hampshire programming when Salem, NH begins cablecasting local and educational programming on one access channel due to efforts of local media activist Art Berlin.

Access in Massachusetts began when Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT) got its start in 1972 as the Somerville Media Action Project (SMAP), a non-profit youth empowerment program that taught photography, film and video. SMAP members and other community activists mobilized to make sure the City of Somerville and Warner Cable included PEG access in their 1973 contract, and video classes began at the new Warner facility before the year ended. SMAP's programming was cablecast in 1974. Warner staff did not always create

an atmosphere conducive to public access and the community's exercise of its First Amendment rights, and on at least one occasion, they pulled the plug on a program and had a producer arrested. (The producer sued and Warner settled out of court for \$2,000.)

When Warner renewed its contract in 1982, SCAT was incorporated as a separate non-profit organization, one of the first non-profit public access centers in the country. SCAT, which moved into an old firehouse in the middle of Somerville's Union Square, was mandated to run the public and educational access channels.

One of the other oldest community-based public access organizations in the nation and an early participant in the NFLCP was the Cable Council of Schenectady, NY, incorporated in October 1974. By 1979, SACC had six employees and over 300 members producing a wide variety of programs. The '80s saw funding (and staffing) cutbacks, but the public access channel and production and editing facilities continued to serve the communities in Schenectady and the surrounding area. In 1991, SACC initiated efforts to upgrade the facilities and supported the city in its protracted franchise renegotiations. The agreement signed in May of 1994 ultimately transformed SACC from a support group at the company's access operation to the operator of the public access channel and owner-operator of studio and editing facilities, which serve producers throughout the region.

Even though Public Access Channel C was launched in July 1971 in Manhattan, it was not until the summer of 1975 that programming development began for Government Access Channel L. The staff of the programming department of Manhattan Cable and a group of interns that included Chuck Sherwood, and later John Sandifer, began to experiment with programming formats. Red Burns of the Alternate Media Center was the consultant for the development. After hours, the conference room was transformed into a live, call-in studio and "Manhattan at Large" became a weekly program hosted by Councilmen-at-Large Bobby Wagner and Henry Stern. Monthly, a crew taped the complete four hour meeting of Community Planning Board 10 of the Upper Eastside, and these meetings were

also cablecast on the channel.

With the establishment of Automation House on East 68th Street as a live studio by Manhattan Cable in the summer of 1976 for the origination of alternative coverage of the Democratic National Convention, Channel L Working Group (CLWG) moved uptown. In 1979 Sandifer and Sherwood co-founded the



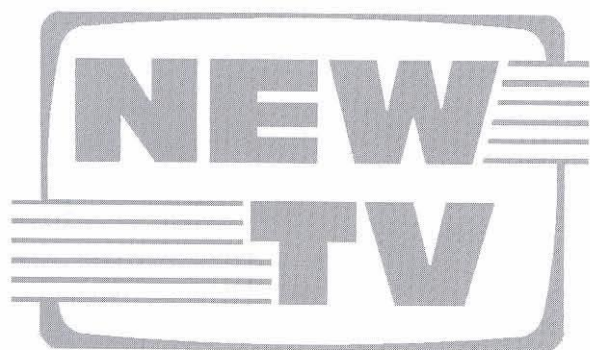
Getting to the point at conference.

nonprofit that was funded by Manhattan Cable. They managed the time slots and the users and scheduled the live, call-in programming that was produced and directed by interns from the television departments of many area universities. The users were the twelve community planning board districts, all of the Manhattan council members, state representatives and senators, the city agencies and the nonprofits that were involved in the public policy arena—LWV and the NRDC—and the Brooklyn Museum.

In 1980 CLWG moved downtown. The City of New York provided office space at 49-51 Chambers Street behind city hall. With a new rented studio on 22nd Street, the CLWG Wednesday evening of live, call-in programming became an institution by providing Manhattan residents with direct access to their elected and appointed officials on all of the hot public policy topics of the day. By 1984 both John and Chuck had left and Susan Stone Shapiro became executive director. She greatly expanded the funding through grants and state support, as well as adding staff and an extensive internship program. Susan also developed the non-profit production grants program funded by the New York Community Foundation. With the coming cable franchise renewal in 1990, Manhattan Cable defunded CLWG. Programming responsibility for the municipal channels moved to the newly created nonprofit Sidewalks of New York.

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NEW YORK - MASSACHUSETTS - RHODE ISLAND
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In 1975 the Salem, NH School District began a four-year television production vocational program for high school students. Students also covered community events for the local access channel.

In 1976, as the National Endowment for the Arts grant ended, the fellows and interns of the AMC formed a steering committee to plan a future direction for the group. The group held its first meeting in Rika Welsh's office at MIT to begin the process of organizing the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. In 1977 Ann McIntosh, Mike Aronson, Barry McQuilken, and Marilyn DeAngelis edited the first *NFLCP Newsletter*, precursor to *CTR* and then *CMR*.

In mid-1977, access arrived on Cape Cod, MA with the help of the local cable channel. When nonprofit organizations were invited to use the channel, members of the Cape Cod Writers' Conference (later Center) grasped the opportunity. Seven writers trained, then launched the weekly half-hour show, *Books and the World*. The first guest was journalist Ivan Sandrof, founder of the National Book Critics Circle.

Twenty-three years later the show is still televised weekly on Cape Cod public access channels as well as others around the state. The all-volunteer crew has changed over time, but the goal is the same: to showcase authors and their works and then preserve the interviews on tape at the Cape Cod Community College Library. It is now the longest running weekly public access show in Massachusetts and maybe the nation. Many of the country's top authors have been guests, including Mary Higgins Clark, Mike Wallace, Robert Ballard and the late Edward Gorey. Hundreds of author interviews later, *Books and the World* was recognized nationally when a Writers' Digest columnist listed it as one of the five top author interview shows in May 1999. The others were *Oprah's Book Club*; the Learning Channel's *Great Book Festival*, C-Span's Book-notes and the *Charlie Rose Book Show*!

Access in Connecticut began in 1977 when Stand, Inc of Derby, CT received a \$76,645 CETA block grant for community media organizing, a \$14,375 two year grant from LEAA, and a \$7,844 grant from the Connecticut Foundation of the Arts.

In 1978, the NE Region, New England and New York, organized and Ann

McIntosh was the first chairperson.

In 1979 a media coalition attended closed meetings of Boston's Cable Council and Jay April presented the NFLCP advocacy position at a public hearing in Fanueil Hall.

In 1980, Peter Brown of St. Johnsbury, VT organized over a dozen Vermont educators and cable programmers to testify at legislative hearings to advocate for the creation of a regulatory arm for cable. Vermont State College in Lyndon received a \$70,000 NTIA grant to construct a microwave link and production facility called LINC. They joined St Johnsbury in originating live programming in northern Vermont. Also in that same year, National Board member and Atlanta City Council member, James Bond testified with Jay April before the Connecticut Public Utilities Control Board about the effects of Times-Mirror cable/newspaper cross-ownership on Hartford.

The May 1981 regional conference in New York City "Cable TV: Programming your Community Channels" attracted 125 participants and 33 new members and saw the renewal of the region as Chuck Sherwood became the chair.

In 1984 Londonderry, NH launched Access when the Cable Advisory Board and Londonderry School District joined forces to start public access. Seven hundred fifty square feet of space in the high school was allocated for studio, offices, and edit space. In that same year Chittenden County VT. launched CCTV, a public access nonprofit serving the towns of Burlington, South Burlington, Essex, Essex Junction, Williston, Winooski and St. George in June on then Channel 8.

The 1985 National Conference was held in Boston and was coordinated by Rika Welsh. The same years also saw the formation of the Community Television Network in Rhode Island.

Public policy activism and advocacy came to the forefront in '87 and '88 with the establishment of minimum access standards in New York and filings of 27 cable bills in Massachusetts. NE Public Policy Chair Randy Visser created a clipping and information file on access issues, filed comments, provided testimony, and assisted with access standard proposals in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont.

In 1990, membership increased by 25

percent with 68 nonprofit and 179 individual members that brought total membership to 258. Rika Welsh was re-elected to a second term as chair. In that same year the region welcomed Regroupement des Televisions Communautaires et Locales du Quebec (RTCL), our counterpart organization in Canada to the April regional conference. Discussions with RTCL have led to the development of a "friendship accord" between the region and RTC.

The early '90s saw Chittenden County, VT Government Access expanded local access channels and launched Town Meeting Television, the government access channel. The CT Chapter received provisional status from national in January and hosted the spring regional conference in Hartford, CT. The region had eight delegates at the '91 National Conference and six representatives attended the Video Olympics in France. Former chairs of the region—Chuck Sherwood, Gerry Field, and Rika Welsh—



SCAT dedicates a new facility in 1999.

received the Buske Leadership Award.

After completing an eight-year franchise battle, Mayville, NY gained local access in 1995 and began local programming with Fourth of July activities. The first series program—*Senior Report with Reed Powers*—also began in July. This live call in has aired every Saturday since, except for Christmas 2000 and New Years 2001. Also, in 1995 the National Alliance conference was held in Boston and coordinated by Rika Welsh.

In 1996, the Massachusetts Chapter established a scholarship fund allowing people to attend Alliance events. Over \$2,000 was distributed to worthy individuals throughout the state. The chapter also combined efforts with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, establishing meetings in a half dozen communities that presented options to centers



Congratulations on 25 years of grass roots organizing, free speech and community animation!

CCTV, founded in 1984 in Burlington, Vermont, advocates for public access and community media in Vermont. We currently operate **Channel 17/Town Meeting Television** (government access serving Vermont's largest county), **Northern Image Production** (professional video production and duplication services) and **CyberSkills/Vermont** at the Old North End Community/Technology Center (providing computer awareness, training and access).

CCTV ■ 294 N. Winooski Avenue ■ Burlington, Vermont 05401
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Congratulations from Boston Neighborhood Network to the Alliance for Community Media for 25 years of support for Community Access Television.

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(919) 831-6278
(919) 831-6877 fax number
Contact: Karyn Chalmers Thomas
Access Coordinator



concerning fundraising.

In 1996 Chairman Brian Wilson moved to California and Information Services Chair John Donovan filled in. Long time member Chuck Sherwood left and Betsy Carson, George Manfra, and Lisa Scorgie-Evarts joined in creating a more geographically diverse board (Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire). Peter Miller of Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet) handed his seat to CTCNet NE Coordinator Deb Snow.

The 2001 session of the Connecticut General Assembly introduced legislation to establish a genuine franchise fee for cable operations in the state. The proposed law, HB5540, would replace the present structure of taxes and fees with a traditional five percent franchise fee. The bill requires a majority of the collected amount to be earmarked for community media and other educational initiatives.

MID-ATLANTIC

District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia

BY FORMER REGIONAL CHAIR JOHN ROCCO

Red Burns and Phyllis Johnson of AMC visited the ATC system in Reading, PA in **1971** after agreeing to work with ATC to establish a community access project there. ATC indicated that it was "trying hard to be one of the leading innovators in providing local origination...as well as access."

1972 ■ In Reading, PA ATC donated \$6,000 in equipment, office space, and telephones to the video access experiment to be conducted by Alternate Media Center.

- Coordinator Phyllis Johnson moved to Reading, placed an ad in the paper and 20 people responded.
- Production workshops began and the group agreed to produce one hour of original programming per week under the title *Video Tapestry*.
- Within the first 12 weeks, 14 tapes were cablecast.
- About 60 people received video training from Phyllis. Joe Masciotti was among those first trained and later that year he was hired as the full-time public access coordinator of Berks-Suburban. Masciotti became the system manager in 1976.
- The National Cable Television Association presented its award for pub-

lic relations to Berks Cable in Reading for its video access plan.

1973 ■ Controversy erupted in Reading when the Ku Klux Klan cablecast a program on the access channel. The local Human Relations Council presented a cablecast intended to fight racial discrimination and the access channel became a forum for community feelings in the aftermath of the Klan program.

1974 ■ Roger Prois produced a nightly news show in Fort Lee, NJ.

- Local programming began in Vineland, NJ in April. Public Access Productions, a non-profit group formed by Mickey Brandt and four other community members, initiated the project on Teleprompter's channel and the production facility was located in Teleprompter's garage.

- According to National Cable Television Association's 1974 survey of local origination, local cable programming was clearly thriving.

- The FCC dropped its local origination requirement for cable operator.

1975 ■ Alternate Media Center (AMC) and New York University's Graduate School of Public Administration received the go-ahead for a grant from the National Science Foundation to experiment with how social service delivery to senior citizens might be accomplished via two-way cable in Reading, PA.

- The Altoona Area Public Library in Pennsylvania began its first cable programming effort as a summer pilot project. The project provided about 90 minutes of programming per week.

1976 ■ NFLCP is formed. A Steering Committee divides the country up into regions and interns began organizing the regions from which they came. The seven regions are born.

1977 ■ Randy Feldman (Community Video Workshop, Livingston, NJ) coordinated NFLCP's Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, and invited Alex Bennett, the controversial producer of *Midnight Blue*.

- National Science Foundation funding for the interactive experiment in Reading ended. Berks Community Television formed and pulled together funding and staff to keep the two-way system running.

- Videomaker/access coordinator Nancy Jesuale woke up July 20, 1977 to find herself in the midst of the Johnstown flood. She documented the damage with her portapac.

- Nancy Jesuale – SAC-TV (Johnstown, PA) – Regional Coordinator.

- Mid-Atlantic members are maintaining contact via letters and questionnaires, although the group has not officially reconvened since March 1977.

- Jesuale said that commitment to local work has made it difficult for members to plan another conference. However, Jesuale is waiting for a response to a plea she sent out to Mid-Atlantic members asking for volunteers to take over conference planning.

1979 ■ Regional business was held in June at Mike Wex's fabulous Cross Country Cable facility in Bound Brook, NJ; 16 community programmers attended.

1980 ■ Regional coordinators were Jerry Richter and Harriet Moss.

- Berks Community Television in Reading negotiated an agreement with ATC which included a commitment for an annual \$50,000 to BCTV during the next six years (the 17-year-old franchise had no access provisions); in return, BCTV pledged 30 hours per week of programming on the 12-channel system.

- The NFLCP's Mid-Atlantic Spring Regional Conference, "Community Television in the Eighties," attracted 50 members to its May conference in York, Pennsylvania. (speakers included George Stoney and Mayor Elizabeth Marshall). Topics included neighborhood video, cable technology, and the philosophy of the cable ministry.

- Over 100 people attended NFLCP's fall regional conference in October in Reading, PA. Participants observed Reading's five interactive facilities (which were up to 18 miles apart). "Interactive and Community Programming" demonstrated the topic first-hand by holding its initial sessions at five locations as far as 18 miles apart via two-way video cable television.

1981 ■ Charlotte Bliss became the new regional coordinator.

- The October meeting at Temple University in Philadelphia featured Cynthia Pols of the National League of Cities and Jay Ricks of the National Cable Television Association. The keynote address was delivered by Les Brown, editor of *Channels of Communications*.

1984 ■ Greg EplerWood served as regional rep to the national board.

- Reading, PA hosted a regional confer-

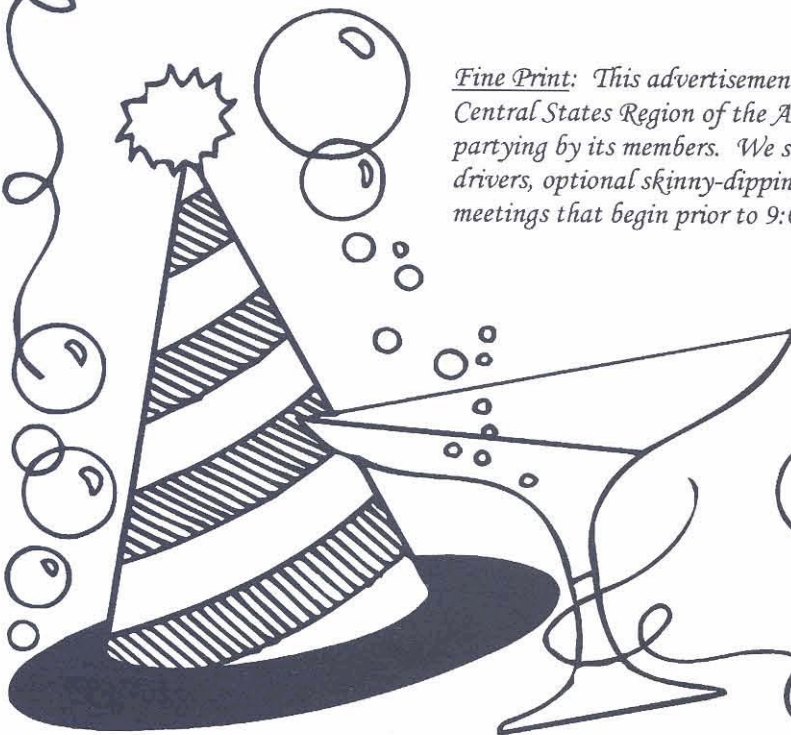
PARTY ON!

The Central States Region of the Alliance for Community Media wishes to congratulate the NFLCP/ACM on reaching its 25th Anniversary. Let's toast this moment together!



Attendees at the Central States Spring '01 Regional Conference in Fort Wayne, IN gathered to send 25th Anniversary wishes to the NFLCP/ACM.

Fine Print: This advertisement in no way implies that the Central States Region of the ACM condones irresponsible partying by its members. We strictly insist on designated drivers, optional skinny-dipping, and no Saturday morning meetings that begin prior to 9:00 AM.



ence in October. Reading Mayor Karen Miller delivered the keynote address. The focus was on franchising the first day, administration and regulation the second, and volunteer producers the third.

- Cate Steele (Montgomery County, MD) and Deanna Pigg (Fairfax County Public Library, VA) reported as active programming coordinators of the Mid-Atlantic Region.

- Arlington Community Television in Arlington, VA reported activity on programming schedule, including a science fiction soap opera, music programs, and a documentary on Africa.

- Mercer County Community College, in Trenton, NJ hosted the spring conference.

- The region published a newsletter for two consecutive quarters.

- Capital Area Chapter was formed and held regular meetings with as many as 75 attendees.

1986 ■ No regional coordinator listed.

- Conference in Baltimore, MD – “Introduction to Cable Access, Managing Access, and Cable Policy.” – Keynote speaker: Henry Geller, former FCC General Counsel.

1987 ■ Cliff Hall is regional chair

- Three new access centers: Baltimore Cable Access Corporation (MD), Carroll Community Television (Carroll County, MD), and Channel 30 Group (Woodbridge, VA)

- Cliff Hall resigns. Robert Oringel chosen acting chair.

- Fall conference held in Fairfield, NJ – “Creating Programming Diversity”

1988 ■ Spring regional conference hosted by Pittsburgh Community Television. NFLCP Chairperson Sharon Ingraham keynote address on “The past, present, and future of NFLCP.”

1990 ■ Region conducted a survey to determine how many access facilities are in the region. Conducted by DCTV (Washington, DC), volunteers called a list of cable systems in the region, provided by NCTA. The data collected was to be used to rebuild the region.

- In January, Atif Harden and Reginald Carter were invited to the Citizens for Public Access Coalition in Philadelphia (CPACP) to participate in a coalition strategy meeting.

- In April, a day long “access fair” was held to acquaint Philadelphia citizens and organizations with “the exciting pos-

sibilities of public access cable programming, currently not available in Philadelphia.” Mid-Atlantic Region members were prominent in their assistance and participation.

- The Northeast region graciously allowed the Mid-Atlantic to share billing at their April conference in East Hartford, CT.

1996 ■ The region as a whole was relatively inactive up until an active group of members, led by John Rocco, formed a new regional board in 1996. This group first set their sights on reorganizing the membership, and generating interest in the Region.

1998 ■ • The Region held its first conference in several years in spring 1998 in State College, PA, with about 30 participants. The conference was hosted by CNET, the area’s Government and Education Access Channels. The conference was successful enough to create a positive account balance in the Region’s treasury for the first time in years.

1999 ■ The 1999 spring conference was held in Carroll County, MD, and was hosted by CCTV and organized by Marion Ware, CCTV’s coordinator.

2000 ■ Spring regional conference was held in Arlington, VA, hosted by Arlington Community Television and headed up by Jackie Steven, ACTV operations manager.

- Also in 2000, John Rocco moved out of the Region, and resigned as chair. James Rossi was elected at the spring conference and seated at the November national board meeting.

SOUTHEAST

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, No. Carolina, So. Carolina, Tennessee

BY REGIONAL DAVID VOGEL

Jed Carpenter’s Broadside Video, a video access center in Johnson City, TN specialized in the documentation of the issues, lifestyles, and traditions in Appalachia in **1972**. The group began showing tapes in their community, with some distribution via cable in a few nearby towns.

1974 ■ Phyllis Scalf replaced filmmaker Chairs Horton mid-year, and continued the tradition of tapemaking on Appalachian culture, sponsored by Tennessee’s Broadside TV.

1975 ■ Rev. Dan Matthews starts Channel 20, the public access channel in Knoxville, Tennsee. The first broadcast was the Christmas Eve service from St.

John’s Episcopal Church. The channel operations were funded by the church and the City of Knoxville. For over a decade the volunteer driven channel was guided by Peggy M. Gilbertson, from studios located in the basement of the church. As programming issues arose with the church, the channel incorporated as a not-for-profit in 1984 and the channel moved to space in a hallway of the city/county building. In 1987, 7,000 square ft. of new studio space was provided by the City of Knoxville. The channel, with 10 employees, continues to operate from that space today.

1976 ■ NFLCP is formed. A steering committee divides the country up into regions and interns were assigned regions to begin organizing.

1977 ■ NFLCP representatives attended the Video South Conference in Johnston City, TN.

WRKB radio, the first black-owned cable radio station in the country premiered in Knoxville in April. Ron Kemp and John Schnur of North Carolina State University succeeded Margaret Gregg of Broadside Video (Johnson City) as NFLCP regional coordinators.

1980 ■ Access Atlanta produced *Encounters*, the first public access show in Atlanta. NFLCP’s Southwest Region co-sponsored the “Cable TV and the Arts” conference with Access Atlanta and local arts groups; the August event drew 300 participants from all over the U.S.

Over 100 people attended the NFLCP’s Southeast Region’s “Minorities and Cable” conference in November. It

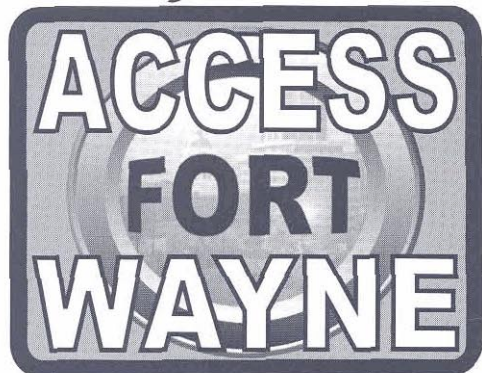


Fayetteville [AK] Open Channel in 1983.

was coordinated by southeast regional coordinator Jabari Simana, with help from access producers in Atlanta. Rev. Dan Matthews left Knoxville for a ministry in Atlanta, leaving behind Channel 20, the successful, five-year-old public access operation located in St. John’s Episcopal Church. Peggy Gilbertson continued as the coordinator of this model access system.

1981 ■ Access Atlanta received the first

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The Alliance
from*



In our twentieth year, we at Access Fort Wayne wish to congratulate the Alliance, with whom we share the same dedication to securing the right of free speech to electronic media.

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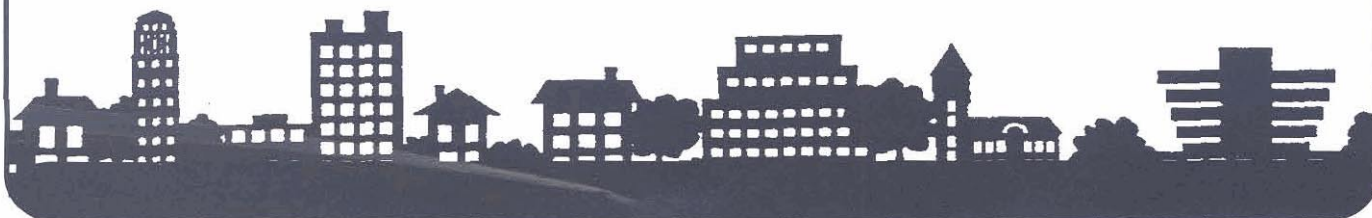
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Alliance For Community Media's visionary leadership.**



portion of a \$24,000 grant from Cable Atlanta and hired Kathy Herman as coordinator. Cable Atlanta celebrated its first year of access operations with a mayoral proclamation honoring access. An access awards gala was cablecast live.

To follow up on the Miami franchise award, NFLCP's Southeast fall regional conference was held in that city.

1983 ■ Bob Sepe became director of cable communication for the City of Tampa. His primary responsibility was to oversee construction of Tampa's first cable television system. Media General [aka Tampa Cable Television] had been granted a franchise earlier that year. As part of its "Community" commitment, Media General agreed to provide public access studios, equipment, staff and funds. Bob worked closely with Bob Heide (GM of Tampa Cable) to design studio facilities and recruit the staff.

1984 ■ About 80 people attend Southeast spring regional conference in Atlanta, the first regional event in over a year. The NFLCP board of directors accepted a new NFLCP chapter in the Tampa, Florida area. Southeast fall regional conference was held in Tampa, FL. Focus was on program production.

Frank Turano and Bob Sepe were elected coordinators for the region. Access on Tampa Cable premiered in November; 200 community producers were trained. Forty-eight hours of live access shows marked the start of Miami's Educational Telecommunications Center; 130 producers were certified; cable reached 150,000 homes.

1985 ■ David Olive, a public access loyalist from Iowa, became the first access manager in 1985. He in turn recruited Ann Flynn and several others. Dave was an active member of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP). A year later, a Tampa contingent composed of Bob Sepe, Dave Olive, Frank Turano (Hillsborough County's cable television administrator), and three members of the Tampa Cable Committee (Laura Blaine, Richard Turkel, and Joe Caranante) attended the national NFLCP meeting.

At the meeting, they quickly discovered most all regions of the county were represented, except the southeast. Responding to the polite arm twisting of Sue Buske, Frank Turano and Bob Sepe agreed to organize a small regional con-



...we see the public access movement as a continuation of the dream and the vision of the Civil Rights movement, and the human rights movement generally. What we were marching for was to get a hearing."

**— The Honorable Andrew Young,
1993 conference in Atlanta**

ference. It was well attended. By 1987 PEG access had become part of the Tampa community fabric. That year in Chicago, Frank Turano, Tony Bello (Dave County's Cable Administrator) and Bob Sepe agreed to host the national NFLCP conference in Tampa the following year.

In April of 1985 Mindy Snyder was hired by City of Tampa Cable Administrator Bob Sepe to operate the government access channel for the city. Bob had convinced all the council members and mayor that government access was the wave of the future so this was an exciting time because she was coming in to operate a station from the ground level. The cable company purchased equipment for them to televise and replay the council meetings; six months after their first cablecast, they were telecasting live council meetings. Since Mindy was the only staff person producing programming, she scheduled workshops for city employees in the basics of television production. Employees from such diverse departments as water and sewer, police and fire were running cameras for the council meetings. With the assistance of these city employees, they produced programs about their departments and therefore, were able to justify hiring additional staff. Over the years, staff, program diversity and equipment

purchases increased. Sixteen years later, she is still there, watching all this with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

1988 ■ Tampa '88 was an overwhelming success for the national organization and the region. No one remembers the speakers, but they all can recall the pink flamingos and non-stop music of the beach bands. Tampa '88 became the cornerstone for the formation of the Southeast Region of the NFLCP.

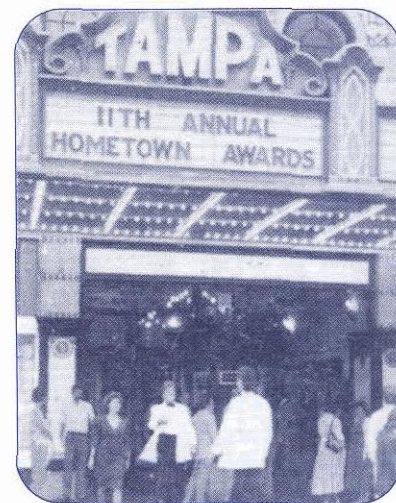
1990 ■ Ann Flynn (Goldenberg) (Tampa Educational Cable Consortium) takes over as chair of the Southeast region. She serves from 1990-1994, then from 1996-1998. Regionals in Tampa ("On the Beach") and Atlanta.

1993 ■ Southeast Region hosts the Alliance for Community Media National Conference and Trade Show in Atlanta.

1994-99 ■ David Vogel (Knoxville, TN) serves as chair from 1994-1999. Regional conferences in Raleigh, Atlanta, and Greensboro, NC.

2000 ■ Greg Vawter (Hillsborough County Television) serves as chair.

2001 ■ David Vogel serves as chair. Regional conference in Asheville, NC.



Tampa, Florida hosted the 1988 Conference and will again in 2004.

CENTRAL STATES

Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky

BY HAP HAASCH, REGIONAL INFORMATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

It is no mere coincidence that the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP), now known as the Alliance for Community Media (the Alliance), was formed in the heart of the Central States Region—Centerville, Ohio



Thank You Alliance For 25 Great Years!

Learn about our
23 year history at
www.datv.org



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THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Thanks to everyone for making the past 25 years
so much fun! Chuck Sherwood

People TV in Atlanta, GA sends congratulations and
cheers for the next 25 years. We are honored to be a
part of this extraordinary community. We love ya'll.

N.J. Coordinator, Alan S. Pollack, Esq.,
Producer of Ackshun AI presents, Jersey City

Congratulations CMR on your 25th Anniversary!
Fair Lawn Community Television, Fair Lawn, NJ

NCCTV, New Castle Community Television, NY
Something good is always on. Happy 25th ACM.

Cambridge Community Television salutes
the Alliance for Community Media.

Say Hi to Helen for me and give my love to
International. Happy Anniversary, Karen Helmersen.

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Music

Entertainment

Since

1983



Central States celebrates Halloween.

to be specific. This region has consistently served the organization with leadership and programmatic support that continues to this day.

Let's get some of the factual details out of the way before we get to the REALLY interesting stuff:

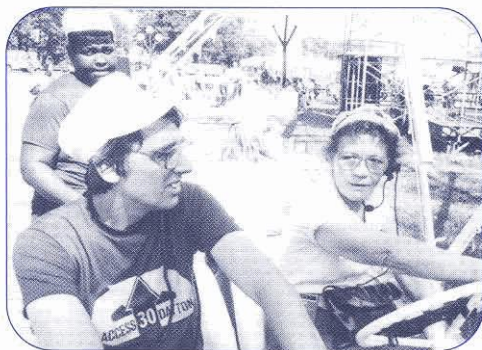
- The Central States Region did not exist when the NFLCP was initially formed in 1976. However, sometime in late 1977 or early 1978 (our institutional memory is sketchy about this, as our founders have all reached and/or passed middle age), the Central States Region was created from a geographic reallocation to include its present territory of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky.

- The Central States Region has been an incubator of sorts for some of the best known talent in our field, including such notable characters as: Ric Hayes, presently chair of the Alliance National Board of Directors; Dirk Koning, internationally renowned "guru" on things community media; Sue Buske, Miami Valley Cable Council, first executive director of the NFLCP, and now a leading consultant in our field; Randy VanDalsen, of WELM in East Lansing, MI fame; Carl Kucharski, ACTV-21 in Columbus then on to Somerville, MA and consulting assignments; Greg Vawter, Waycross Community TV in suburban Cincinnati, who is now leading a major government access operation in Hillsborough County, Florida; Bob Devine, current president of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, OH, who provided inspiration and vision from a respectable academic viewpoint in

times of crisis and uncertainty; and of course Roxie Cole of Dayton Community Access whose spirit still presides over all that we do. There are many, many others who have been instrumental in making this region a success, including: Bob Mulbach, Steve Fortriede, Martha Schmidt, Frank Jamison, Ross Rowe, Don Langely, Don Smith, Judy Crandall, and of course the excellent managing editor of this great magazine, Tim Goodwin, another fine product of this region. To those I may have missed, you know who you are and how important you are to us.

- The Central States Region has been recognized by the national organization as "Best Region" on numerous occasions, and we haven't let this go to our heads...for the most part.

- The Central States Region has annually conducted two regional conferences (spring and fall) under a system of rotating the conference sites all around the region and incorporating a variety of



Jim DeWindt and Roxie Cole

access centers into the hosting pool.

- The Central States Region also conducts the Philo T. Farnsworth Video Festival (winners recognized at the fall regional conference) and the Roxie L. Cole Leadership Award (winner recognized at the spring regional

conference).

- The Central States Region has frequently stepped forward to serve the organization as a whole by providing: funding for expansion of the *Community Media Review*; funding for the first membership directory; a loan to cover national office expenses during a cash flow crisis; and management of the *Hometown Video Festival*, when another agent was unavailable and thanks to the inspired leadership of Steve Fortriede and the good people at Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The history of the Central States region is far more complicated than any list of accomplishments or chronological review of important moments. Our history is in fact more appropriately described as the "fabric" woven by quite an eclectic mixture of personalities and circumstances, for example:

- Monthly potluck spaghetti dinners were the precursor to the formation of the Michigan Chapter.

- The Central States Board has met in a variety of curious venues, including: several monasteries, a retirement center for nuns, a Motel 6 located in a rather dubious neighborhood, cabins in a variety of State Parks, and the traditional Christmas Dinner at Lake Wawassee, Indiana.

- With the mantra "work hard, play hard," the region has occasionally been the scene for raucous post conference parties (the list is long, but Michigan City, IN, Troy, MI, Richmond, IN, and Lansing, MI come immediately to mind in "the modern era" ...there's no telling what the venerable ones did in the old days). The names of the culprits responsible for such shenanigans will remain confidential, but rest assured, they are still part of the conference planning process and our oral histories!

Although the Central States Region takes pride in having provided solid leadership and laudable good deeds for our members and the Alliance as a whole, there is something far more important about what we are doing. It has something to do with individual commitment to mission and a sense of "doing the right thing." In essence, the Central States Region of the Alliance has developed a culture of people caring about mission and each other. *That* is what makes the Central States Region special to those of us lucky enough to have served in any official capacity. It is also why many of us have chosen to continue to serve on the regional Board of Directors despite professional and personal challenges that would otherwise turn us away.

One of our many mantras says it best: "What we do is not about technology, it's about people."

Roxie told me to say that...

MIDWEST

Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin

BY REGIONAL CHAIR DAVID HAWKSWORTH

The beginning of public access television, in what is now the Alliance for Community Media's Midwest Region, predated the formation of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP) by at least several years. By 1974, community video efforts were underway



Chicago Access Network Television

(CAN TV) congratulates the Alliance for Community Media, and public access pioneers everywhere, on 25 years of vision and commitment to democratic media. You have opened the door for CAN TV to give every Chicagoan a voice on cable television. One neighborhood, one city at a time, we truly can change the world.

"I commend CAN TV's effort to connect community members with the services and information they need to find jobs and education, tap into cultural resources and learn about each other."

Richard M. Daley, *Mayor, City of Chicago*

"As more people recognize the commercial networks' failure to represent America's diversity, public access can seize the moment as it continues to develop into one of this country's most vital cultural resources."

U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis

*7th Congressional District of Illinois
Producer, "Listening to the People" on CAN TV*

"Cable access is an undeniably democratic oasis in the TV universe."

Allan Johnson, *Chicago Tribune*

"Public access producers control their own message—they talk about what matters, not just what sells."

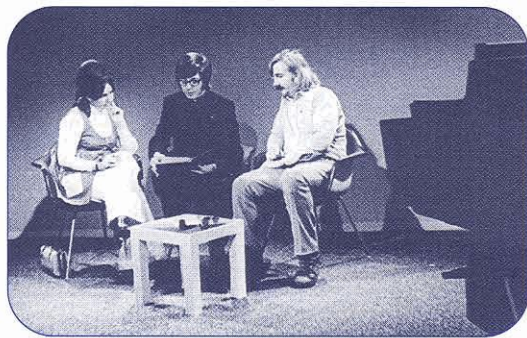
Rev. Willie T. Barrow, *Co-Chair
Rainbow/PUSH Coalition,
Producer, "Rainbow/PUSH Hotline"
on CAN TV*

"CAN TV represents a voice for the voiceless, and the promise of inclusion in the ever-growing worldwide web of information."

José Lopez, *Executive Director
Puerto Rican Cultural Center,
CAN TV Community Partner*

CAN TV

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Madison, WI 1974.

in Dubuque, IA, where Sue Buske was beginning programming with schools and cultural organizations. In Madison, WI, where Gary Knowles was producing a live call-in program (which featured a CB radio hook-in!) and in the Twin Cities, where University of Minnesota students were showing community programming on the local PBS affiliate before cable came to Minneapolis,

The original Midwest Region of the NFLCP in 1976-77 was even bigger then than it is now, covering a huge geographic area which included eleven states. By 1978, though, the Central States region had been formed—taking Michigan and Indiana—and the region assumed its present shape, encompassing Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.

Sue Buske served as the first region chair (or coordinator, as the position was known then) and conferences were held very early on, with June 1977 featuring conferences in Bloomington, IN, and Dubuque, IA.

By 1979, Margie Nicholson was the region coordinator and in May seventy people attended the regional conference in Minneapolis. Access in the region was growing steadily at this time, with access centers springing up in Madison, WI, Trempeleau County, WI, and Abilene, KS, among other places.

In the early 1980s, the Midwest Region conferences were becoming very popular, with over 200 people attending the 1981 spring conference in Evanston, IL. Bill Newbern was the region coordinator at this time, followed by Lily Ollinger.

It should be noted that despite the success of the region at this time, many access centers within the region struggled with budget cutbacks and inadequacies, sub-par equipment, and cable company resistance. For example, in 1981,

after long negotiations, Madison, WI's access operation received the relatively small sum of \$140,000 total over a five year period. This forced them to raise sixty percent of their funds from grants and other sources. Dubuque Community Access Television had to share two color cameras with the cable company. Access funding cutbacks were proposed by the cable companies in Minneapolis/St. Paul and in Milwaukee in the early 1980s.

At the same time, however, many grants were being received by region access centers. The Wisconsin Arts Board awarded a grant to several local cable commissions in Wisconsin to present workshops with video artists and experts. In Sun Prairie, WI, Kids 4 received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Dubuque Community Access Television also was awarded an NEA grant to purchase editing equipment.

In the mid 1980s, Bootsie Anderson served as region chair, followed by Dave Keyes. In 1986, the Midwest Region won the NFLCP's Best Region Award. In 1987 the NFLCP's national conference was held in Chicago. At this time, several chapters were active in the regions: Intercomm Southern Wisconsin, Minnesota, Northeast Illinois, and Milwaukee Metro. At this time, the Midwest Region was the largest region in terms of members.

By 1989, the region had dropped from the top spot membership-wise, but the region continued to be active, with conferences in Madison, WI and Dubuque, IA drawing over 100 people each. Mary Bennin had taken over as region chair at this point. In the late 1980s, the region was active in the (ultimately unsuccessful) fight to keep public access alive in Kansas City in the face of Ku Klux Klan programming there.

In the early 1990s, the region board was quite large, with 15 people serving in 1991. However, according to the region's 1991 annual report, the region "seem[ed] to be in a transitional period between an old and new generation of leadership," and the regular conferences and other services began dwindling. In 1992, Warrior Richardson organized the Nebraska Chapter with some producers

from Omaha. The region was active in carrying out a letter writing campaign against video dial tone in 1992. In 1991, the Minnesota chapter reported 59 members and held a conference in October of that year. The national conference was held in St. Paul in 1992.

In the early and mid 1990s, Minnesota became the strongest area of the region, with Kathleen Greenwood and then Pam Colby serving as region chair. Regional conferences were held in Iowa City, Minneapolis, and Hudson, WI in 1994 and 1995, but after that, the region and all its chapters went dormant. Despite this, the Alliance's national conference was held in Milwaukee in 1997.

The dormancy continued until 1998, when David Hawksworth took over as region chair. A new board was assembled and the rebuilding process began. A region conference was held in Iowa City, IA, in April 2000 with 40 people attending. New region bylaws were established, and another region conference was held in Wisconsin Dells, WI, in April 2001 in conjunction with the Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels, a new independent organization formed during the region's dormancy. Presently, the region counts just over 100 members, about half of what it was at the peak of the region's activity.

As we approach the Alliance's 25th anniversary, the Midwest Region seems to have come full circle, with a small but dedicated number of people struggling to bring access centers from the extremely large geographic area of nine states together to further the mission of ensuring everyone's access to electronic media. In the next 25 years, we hope we can match (and perhaps even exceed) the successes of our predecessors in this endeavor!

SOUTHWEST

Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas

BY REGIONAL CHAIR PAT GARLINGHOUSE

According to "Regional Reports," the Southwest Region became active in the '80s with Austin hosting the National NFLCP Conference in 1979 and Houston and Fort Worth hosting two Spring NFLCP Conferences in March and May 1981. Rapid growth of NFLCP membership in the region spurred plans for even more activity—both Dallas and New Orleans hosting national conferences in

Southwest Region

Home of the 2002 Alliance International Conference & Trade Show



ARKANSAS
Community Access Television - Fayetteville
Government Access Channel - Little Rock
U A L R 29 - Little Rock
Rich Mountain Community College - Mena



LOUISIANA
Community Access Channel - Covington
Acadiana Open Channel - Lafayette
New Orleans Media Center - New Orleans
TCI of Louisiana - Violet



OKLAHOMA
Pegasys, Inc. - Enid
Cox Cable Oklahoma City - Oklahoma City



TEXAS
City of Arlington - Arlington
Austin Community Access Center - Austin
Austin Community College - Austin
Austin Independent School District - Austin
Austin Music Network - Austin
City of Austin Channel 6 - Austin
Travis County Television - Austin
Upstart, Inc. - Bastrop



Dallas Community Television - Dallas
T W C 15 - El Paso
Open Access Channel 46 - Ft. Worth
City of Houston Municipal Channel - Houston
Houston Community College T V - Houston
H I S D Television - Houston
Houston MediaSource - Houston
Irving Community TV Network - Irving
City of Laredo Public Access Channel - Laredo
L I S D T V - Lubbock
MCTV - Missouri City



Anderson County Educational Television - Palestine
City of Pasadena Texas - Pasadena
Paragon Cable Channel 20 - San Antonio
Cable One - Sherman
Tyler Independent School District - Tyler
Vista Cablevision - Wichita Falls

Congratulations Alliance ~ 25th Anniversary!

the '80s. Fort Worth was one of the last major cities in the Southwest Region to grant a cable franchise.

- Early Southwest conferences were devoted exclusively to low power television. Now the Alliance is promoting low power radio as an added distribution of PEG access programming. Other conference tackled the issues involved in successfully beginning access. Successful access centers, then as well as now, involve the municipality, the cable operator and the access user. Everyone agreed that all three entities must be actively involved for access success.

- The now famous and unique *Austin Music Network* (AMN) joined ranks with the Southwest in 1995. AMN is a cable channel owned by the city for the purpose of stimulating development of the local music industry to promote Austin music and musicians. The channel was created by the city council as an economic development project, distributed on Time Warner Entertainment Company's cable system through a cable franchise agreement.

- The Region also boasts of Austin/Houston producer Patricia Moore who, nearly single-handedly created a public access television/radio/internet station and multimedia training center for the Mayans in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Funded generously as of September 2000 by the Soros Foundation, the center is now fully operational.

- A great success for free expression rights occurred in Palestine, TX in 2000 when long-time activist and former councilman Joe Ed Bunton took the city government to task over the attempted elimination of public access from the cable line-up. Joe Ed now oversees a thriving showcase of First Amendment programming.

- The Southwest Region Conference, October 2000, paid a visit to the beginnings of access in the Southwest, in Austin, Texas. (See related article on 2000 trek up Mt. Larsen, by Marshall Parker.) Next year, in July 2002, the Southwest Region proudly sponsors the Alliance International Conference and Trade Show in Houston. The theme, "Cultural Diversity" will permeate all activities.

Houston MediaSource History 2001

- Houston's entry into free speech television came late for the nations' fourth largest city. Houston has long been a



In 1987, Activists in Austin, TX waged a successful grassroots campaign against the cable company's attempt to gut franchise provisions for Access. The "Don't Mess With Access" armadillo, inspired by the "Don't Mess With Texas" anti-litter campaign, was their mascot. See story page 79.

unique environment known for its free-wheeling business built on: first cotton and shipping, then oil, space and technology. But it is also the most culturally and ethnically diverse city in America.

- Houston MediaSource (HMS) found its niche in Houston amid a plethora of media entities and now celebrates fifteen years of service to the community. HMS began with an educational mission to serve the public's communication needs by programming educational, political and community shows on cable.

- Once the FCC began emphasizing local programming about children, disabilities, older adults and community and political issues, HMS began to meet these local needs through community partnerships, community radio and the Internet. Our youth services program has grown the most since its inception in 1998.

- HMS excels in community service and outreach through its various partners that bring new viewers to the access channel. OPTICA Illuminations... Theatre for the Deaf; Talento Bilingue de Houston Community Center; the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office; Texas Southern University Renewable Energy and Environmental Program; the University

of Houston School of Communication, the Fifth Ward Enrichment Program, the Houston Police Activities League, along with several local public schools are among its most active partners.

- Recognition for programming excellence comes from many organizations, among them the City of Houston Exemplary Community Service 2000 award; the coveted Community Award from the Museum District Business Alliance for providing a broad community-based format for information, communication and cultural outreach; WAVE, the Western Access Video Excellence 2000 award; and numerous appreciation citations.

- The HMS Board of Directors bring experience from all walks of life in Houston: finance, education, business, arts, film, law, and electronic technologies. The HMS vision is to be part of a city-wide network that connects libraries, schools, neighborhoods and youth groups with access to information. The possibilities are endless!

NORTHWEST

Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

COMPILED AND EDITED BY CAROL BURNS AND DEBORAH VINSEL

It is unknown for certain who the first person was to string a wire to the top of a hill or tower to create a community antenna system. One of the claims for being the first is in Astoria, OR. Other fringe reception areas to get cable early were Bellingham, WA, Eugene, OR, and Olympia, WA.

In Olympia, in the late '60s and early '70s, local people made informal arrangements with the cable owners to program a vacant channel. This sort of thing probably happened in more places than we will ever know. Pocatello, ID has had regularly scheduled access programming without interruption since 1977, longer than anywhere else in our region.

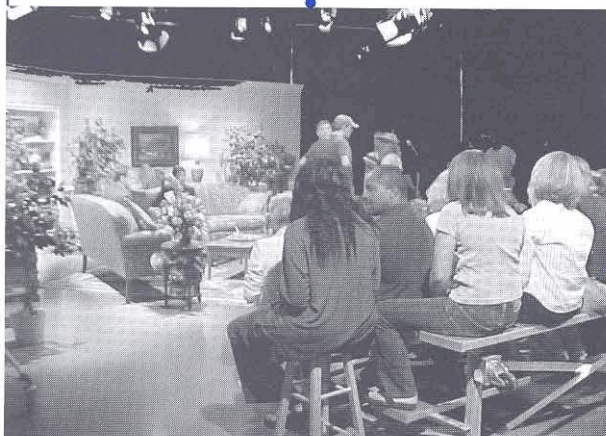
In Seattle, social activism entered the picture. A "feisty old lady" peace activist named Virginia Brookbush led an organized effort to get public access. One cable operator in Seattle made portable equipment, editing and staff available and continued to do that for many years without any formal contractual agreement.

As competition for cable franchises

Dallas

Television

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operating 14 years as a
nonprofit organization



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increased, small systems were purchased by MSOs and "blue sky" proposals were offered to local municipalities. All too often the promises in these proposals were not kept. Access advocates, with assistance from the National Federation for Local Cable Programmers, worked hard to protect the public's right to access.

The NFCLP/Alliance For Community Media Northwest Region has operated without interruption since 1980. We began with Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana, one of nine regions in the national structure. In 1994 we welcomed the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia to the region, with Utah and Wyoming becoming part of the region in 1998-99.

The Northwest Region has benefitted from strong, dedicated leaders. Eric Anderson, Andy Beecher, Rose Read, Jack Schommer, Brian Girtman, Randy Ammon, Anne Mitchell, and Ken Snider have all served as our regional chairs.

We have gathered at least once a year for conferences, often inviting members from neighboring regions to participate. We are grateful to those centers that have taken on the challenge of coordinating conferences in these cities: Gresham, OR; Eugene, OR; Ashland, OR (2); Portland, OR (2); Pocatello, ID; Missoula, MT; Sun Valley, ID; Seattle, WA; Bremerton, WA; Kelso-Longview, WA; Yakima, WA; Spokane, WA; Olympia, WA (2). There also have been three very successful national conferences held in Portland in 1983, 1991, and 1998 with lots of regional involvement.

The *Best of the Northwest Video Festival* began in 1986. It has become the highlight of each spring conference, growing to include over 225 entries yearly from seven states and two Canadian provinces. John Giamberso managed the festival the first few years. Thurston Community Television and Rogue Valley Community TV shared the responsibility for seven years, then handed it off to Multnomah Community Television in 2000. Special recognition goes to Angie Cochran and Loren Coulter at MCTV in Gresham, who were the perennial producers of the awards ceremony. They always amazed us with animated roll-ins and scripts, and entertaining themes.

The Northwest Region has a history of activism. It has been instrumental in helping to develop access throughout the

region. In the early 1980s, access advocates in the Northwest helped organizers in Portland, OR, Gresham, OR, and Olympia, WA as they worked to develop access for their communities.

In 1988-89, the SWAT (Strategic Western Access Team) was developed to provide support to fledgling access organizations. The Region was also hired as a consultant to the Mid-Willamette Valley Cable Regulatory Commission resulting in the creation of Capital Community Television in Salem, Oregon.

In the mid-late 1990s, Alliance members made presentations at community forums and hearings in Seattle, Tacoma, and Bellingham, WA to help educate and inform policy makers and local organizers as they worked to develop nonprofit community media centers. We worked with St. Helens and Eugene, OR to help move their access efforts forward. Seattle Community Access Network celebrated its "grand-opening" in April 2001, one of the newest non-profit access organizations in the region. Eugene now has an all-volunteer access organization, Community Television of Lane County, and Columbia Community Television now serves the people in St. Helens. In 1996, the Northwest Region and Alliance National Board helped secure a gubernatorial veto of an Oregon law that would have allowed Oregon cable operators to censor access channels.

The Northwest Region is also proud of the people from the region who have served as officers of the national board of directors. Alan Bushong and Rob Brading have served as the Alliance national chairs. Alex Quinn, Julie Omelchuck and Adam Haas all served terms as vice-chairs, and Bill Tierney served as treasurer. There have usually been at least two and as many as six Alliance national board members from the Northwest Region.

There are so many people responsible for our success as a region it is impossible to name them all. Over the past 25 years, new faces have joined our ranks, new access centers have opened their doors, and new opportunities have presented themselves. The region has grown through the hard work and dedication of our predecessors. With passion and participation of our current members we will keep growing. Our future history will be written by those yet to come.

WESTERN STATES

Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada and New Mexico

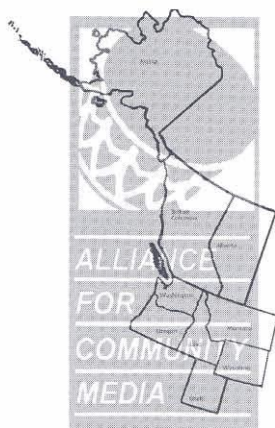
BY REGIONAL CHAIR RON COOPER

The following history is a compilation of memories, some old newsletters, and many "best guesses." To those we do justice to...we thank. To those we have excluded, we apologize. To those who don't care, you missed a lot of great times. It all started back around the time of the gold rush of '49, or was it '48...Let's see here by cracky...where did I put my bi-focals?

The Early Years. The earliest records of the NFLCP Far West Region date back to the first NFLCP newsletter (June/July 1977) which included a "Letter to the Editor" from William Stookey of Videolani in Honolulu, HI. William was asking for help and advice from other access advocates. "Video is about to explode here, if the cable companies don't close the public access door. They want to, but we have the Department of Regulatory Agencies that for the time being seems to be sympathetic with us. Videolani means video heaven in the ancient Hawaiian language." The same newsletter included an extensive article explaining the start-up of a new organization "Grass Roots Video" in Aspen, Colorado (now a part of our Western region).

Continuing from the same newsletter, Far West Regional Coordinator Paul Denn of San Diego provided an update on The Bay Area Community Television Group (comprised of local cable producers in the San Francisco area). "The group will try to communicate through a video journal and a newsletter published by the Marin County Video Center." He went on to cite Manuel Gonzalez of Hayward and their efforts to define a better relationship with the NFLCP national organization. A map of the region indicated that the Far West Region was just that, stretching from Alaska in the north through the northwest to California and onward to Arizona (AK, WA, OR, HI, CA, NV, AZ)

Further regional information is sketchy until the first issue of *Coastal Access* and an update by Constance Carlson, NFLCP Far West regional coordinator in 1981. In April 1981, members of the NFLCP (CA) made a formal presentation to the California Public Broadcasting Commission (CPEC). A video, *Community*



THE Northwest Region OF THE Alliance

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Ensuring Everyone's
Access to Media***

Alaska

Idaho

Montana

Oregon

Utah

Washington

Wyoming

Alberta

***British
Columbia***

***For information about the
Northwest Region of the Alliance,
email nw-alliance@mctv.org
or call (503) 491-7636, x325***

Video in California, produced by Marin Community Video (partially funded by the Foundation for Community Service Television (FCST)), was shown. CPEC was encouraged to work with FCST in promoting and encouraging community service cable programming in California and to establish a state-wide cable advisory committee.

A Far West regional conference was held in Santa Barbara in spring 1982. Speakers included: Randy Van Dalsen, Sue Buske, and Speranza Avram.

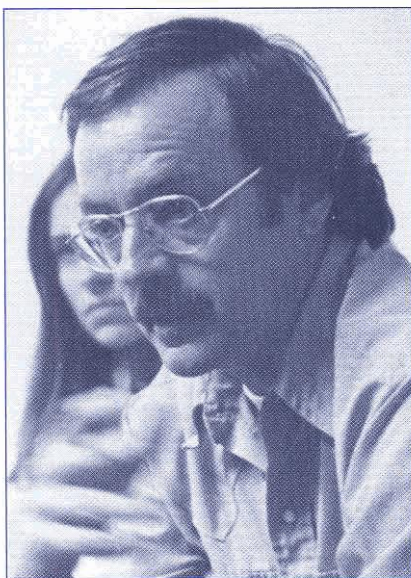
Early NFLCP leaders in the region included Fred Gillette, C.J. Hirschfield, Richard Turner, Alvin Simpson, Camilla King, Helen Weiss, Connie Brand, Alicia Maldonado, Dave Bloch, Ann Englar, Tom Karwin, Ken Fisher, Lon Berquist, Paul Moeller, Duane Elliot, Peter Cooper, and Steve Israelsky.

A Region Reborn. During the mid-80s, community television was being evaluated and encouraged by a different California-based organization. The Foundation for Community Service Cable Television (FCST) was a research and policy based non-profit headed by Kathleen Schuler and Evelyn Pine with an office in San Francisco. FCST was a creature of state legislation (1980-1988) and had a "sunset" provision. When the funds stopped, a void was created. During these years, the NFLCP Far West was not very strong though there was activity in the Bay area of San Francisco and in Southern California.

For most of the '80s, only California had active access operations within the Far West Region. The regional board was comprised of a handful of access advocates who provided leadership until the region grew larger. These leaders included: Reginald Carter, Barb Balitz, David Bloch, Alicia Maldonado, Tom Karwin, Michelle Mann, Dave Kerr, Deb Vinsel, Ron Cooper, Karen George, Kari Peterson, Sabrina Zachery, Mike Henry, and Elliot Margolies.

Michelle Mann is credited for re-mobilizing the Far Western Region by resurrecting the regional conference and hosting a one-day event at Foothill Community College (Los Altos, CA) 1986.

Later that year, Michelle, then executive director at Access Los Altos, met with Dave Bloch and Ron Cooper in a café on Interstate 80 to pass on what records there were of the National Federation of



John Smith, an AMC intern, organized Grass Roots Video in Aspen, Colorado in the '70s.

Local Cable Programmers, Far West Region. There were several hundred dollars in the bank account but no plan of action.

In 1987 at the Lakewood, CA, a joint NFLCP/NATO conference was held. Ron Cooper, director of operations and training for Access Sacramento, was appointed chair of the region. Deb Vinsel was appointed vice chair, Dave Bloch was information services, and Elliot Margolies was public policy chair. Deb, the only person with previous NFLCP leadership experience, had been a regional NFLCP leader from Ohio. As the '90s began, access centers developed in Honolulu and Reno and regional leadership expanded.

The Far West/Western States Region has always provided national leadership in the educational access community. Working together with educational leaders from other communities our milestones include:

1992 ■ The Education Special Interest Group (ED SIG) was formed. Dr. Alice French, Lubbock, TX served as the first chairperson. Subsequent chairs have been SECC's Liz Rhodes and Lucy Grigg.

1993 ■ Coordinated by the Sacramento Educational Cable Consortium (SECC), the educational SIG published a resource guide for their members and distributed the guide to

their members at the conference in Atlanta, GA.

1995 ■ Thanks to Elliot Mitchell, Vanderbilt University, the ED SIG listserv was created when we attended the conference in Boston. Elliot continues to provide this service—with great humor!

1996 ■ The Educational SIG updated the resource guide. Compiled and printed by SECC, 72 organizations provided information about their education facilities and services. The guide was free to all ED SIG members (after paying their extra \$10 to the Alliance). Copies were available through the national office (remember, we met in Washington DC that year)

Regional Newsletter. Dave Bloch, the first executive director in Davis and later *Community Media Review* editor for two years, revived and renamed the regional newsletter. The *Coastal Access* was first published in 1985.

Wave Awards. The First *WAVE* (*Western Access Video Excellence Awards*) video contest was organized in 1988. First called the "Waveform" awards, plaques were presented at a two-day conference hosted by Laina Long and KCTV-19 of Santa Barbara on the campus of UC Santa Barbara. There were 85 *WAVE* entries that first year. In the early '90s, the Far West Region and the Northwest Region began judging each others video contest entries, the Northwest Community Video Awards in the spring and the Far West's *WAVE* awards in the fall.

Simultaneous

Saturdays. To spur membership, the Far West Region organized smaller, one-day meetings in areas that were geographically diverse. The first "Simultaneous Saturday" was organized in the spring of 1989—three sites were linked by phone conference calls.

- 1989—Redding, Compton, Buena Park. These "Saturday" events continued for two more years.
- 1990—Davis, Whittier.
- 1991—Oakland, Sacramento, Hacienda Heights.

The Videotape Exchange: Community Programming Catalogue.

In 1991 and again in 1993 the region published the community programming catalogue, edited by Deb Vinsel. The original database was a product of the now



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*"The farther
backwards you
can look, the
farther forward
you are likely
to see."*

- Winston Churchill



TCTV and the Alliance for Community Media... celebrating our history as we build our future.

Thurston Community Television ~ Olympia, WA ~ www.tctv.net

defunct Foundation for Community Service Television and was given to the Far West Region in 1987. The catalogue listed a number of producers, their programs, and how to contact them directly. If you needed access programming, you were encouraged to purchase the catalogue and get in touch with the producers you found most interesting. The region and Deb Vinsel turned over the records and the concept to the national Alliance office in 1994.

Public Access Phone Advisor (PAPA). From 1991-1995, the Region facilitated the Public Access Phone Advisor (PAPA). The Buske Group was paid a slight honorarium to respond to any questions from regional NFLCP members. The region paid the phone bill and Randy Van Dalsen and Sue Buske were very helpful to many new, as well as experienced, access leaders throughout the region.

Region Expands and welcomes three new states. The Far West region added three states in 1997 when Mountain States Region was dissolved and New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado joined the newly named Western Region.

Best Region. The Far West Region was named NFLCP Best Region in 1989 and 1991.

Overall Excellence WAVE. The WAVE awards invited 85 entries in 1988. In 2000, the total had jumped to 550 entries making WAVE the largest community media contest other than *Hometown*.

For a wealth of further information, names, honors and activities conducted over the years in the Western States, please visit the Region's website at www.aoc-access.org for another 2000 words edited from this CMR piece.

Austin Community Television

It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time (and still is)

BY ANITA STECH

Austin Community Television (ACTV) is one of the first non-profit corporations in the country to provide community-access opportunities. When it was officially incorporated there was no equipment and no training. It was just a group of people dedicated to a great idea in search of resources to make the dream of Access TV come true.

ACTV grew out of an undergraduate class at the University of Texas. Although Austin was one of the larger cable markets at the time, not all of its 12 channels were full. Fresh on the books were the FCC rules establishing the public's right to access to cable TV. There was a lot of talk about "public access television," with its promise of a video soapbox in every pot. And so two students, Frank Rasor and Jim Kosub, suggested, "Why don't we do something about trying to get public access television here?" Of all the resources needed to make it work, we only lacked equipment for training, production, editing and cablecasting, plus channel time. As large as a gap as that seemed to be, we had enthusiasm, organization, and a great idea itself on our side.

Spreading the word would be our first task and ACTV immediately attracted community members, giving the idea more credibility than students alone can provide. George Stoney visited and shared his ideas and encouragement.

In May 1973, ACTV was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. We began outreach in earnest. ACTV members organized community meetings, each targeting a specific interest group—civic organizations, religious groups, schools, sports, government, etc. Yet how could ACTV explain its dilemma—a great idea, but no equipment to make it happen? We told them... "We are here to interest you and other community representatives in this concept of access. Then, if and when the community backs it, we can get funding, because we will have community support. Your interest will get the equipment."

At this same time programming began... It was a pretty simple operation. We drove to the headend at the top of Mount Larsen, parked my VW beetle next to a control panel, opened the trunk, set the video deck inside, hooked up three cords plus a TV for monitoring, and community programming – happened! We even discovered a way to go live from the mountaintop so we could promote our first fundraiser, a rummage sale.

ACTV secured a donated "office" space—a place to put a telephone. It was a place to gather, to keep information, and it was ours. But as ACTV members pumped the community with information and enthusiasm, the reality of continuing without equipment was setting in. So, a brave contingent of access promoters approached the Austin City Council for equipment funding. Although somewhat perplexed with the idea they agreed to donate \$4,000. ACTV was off and running... and I needed to return to my home in Minnesota.

The next time I visited Austin was on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of ACTV. To see the equipment, the staff, the community producers there that day, and to have been associated with an organization that attracted people like Paula Manley and Alan Bushong is an honor.

The story continues long after that humble beginning. The promise of what people can do with a little hunk of the television medium is as great today as it was back in 1973 when ACTV began.

Anita Stech lives in Duluth MN and is a board member of Duluth-Superior Public Access Community Television. Her current public access production projects include coverage of youth sports and community events. She was recently presented with a t-shirt that reads, "Stop me before I volunteer again!"



**AUSTIN
COMMUNITY
TELEVISION**
Early bumper sticker.



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TO THE FUTURE

25 YEARS AND STILL TUNED IN

*The ACM Western States Region
congratulates the Alliance for Community
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www.aocaccess.org

Congratulations, Alliance for Community Media on your 25th anniversary!

***From all of us at
access sacramento***



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Congratulations to the Alliance during its 25th Anniversary Celebration!



Contra Costa Television is an award winning government access channel serving the citizens of Contra Costa County, California. Airing daily since 1995, CCTV reaches 350,000 homes with a potential viewing audience of over 900,000. Educational and government programming, such as: the County Board of Supervisors Meetings, "Ask the Doctor", "For the Record", "Mental Health Perspectives", "Senior Information Journal", college level tele-courses, educational and NASA programming fill out CCTV's channel line-up. We air live satellite teleconferences, call-in programs, one-time taped events and series programming.

CCTV provides intern opportunities for both high school and college students.

Special Services Include:

- ♦ Video Grants for County Departments
- ♦ Program Production
- ♦ Video Equipment/Studio Facility
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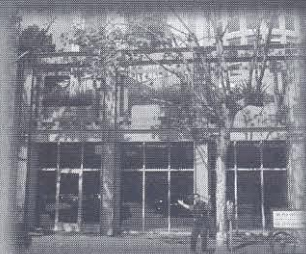


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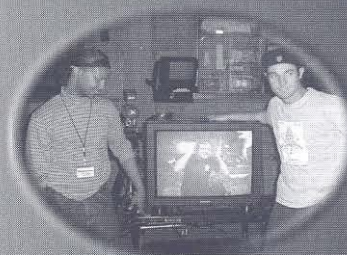


We are a proud member of ACM and the Western Region. Created in 1987, we assumed management of public access in 1999. Good things come to those who wait.



San Francisco Community Television Corporation

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on 25 years of inspired leadership.**



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from

Capital Community TV

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which would not have been possible without our *great* volunteers

Host of the 2001 NorthWest Regional Conference

Winner of the NorthWest Overall Excellence Award 2000 & 2001

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH TELEVISION IN SALEM, OREGON SINCE 1991



WISHING YOU ANOTHER 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS



In this last section of the issue, we've tried to give information that is helpful and interesting. Pay particular attention to the list of Alternate Media interns, who got us started on this 25-year journey, and to the list of past board of directors. We acknowledge all you, for giving hundreds of volunteer hours, often incurring personal expense to participate in the leadership of this organization.

It would be impossible to give each their full due, but each one is an important a part of this historical issue. We thank you all for your contributions.

The same should be said about the early *Newsletter* editors and writers, as well as the *CTR* and *CMR* editorial boards. I have a much fuller appreciation for their work and express our deepest gratitude for their hard work and meaningful publications.

So, browse through this section—and enjoy the patrimony that is to be found in our wonderful past!

– Rika Welsh

AMC INTERNS

1974 ■

Andy Beecher
Kathy Bogle
Sue Buske
Gary Knowles
Jean Rice
Phyllis Scalf
Jeff Ullman

1975 ■

Nancy Bicknell
Mickey Brandt
Vince Brown
David Hoke
Charis Horton
Brian Lee
Rodger Prois
Anne Prutzman
John Strudel

1976 ■

Mike Aronson
Manuel Gonzalez
Nancy Jesuale
Mary Jane McGee
Ann McIntosh
John Smith

1977 ■

Harriet Moss
Jackie Paul

INTERACTIVE TV IN 1975

One of our favorite AMC intern program innovations was done by Mickey Brandt for a public hearing on the location of a Federal prison in Vineland, New Jersey. Mickey and his team were unable to cablecast live from the public hearing, so they taped the event. Every half-hour during the hearing, a volunteer transported the tape back to the studio, where it was cablecast. Home viewers were given the number of a phone outside the hearing room where Mickey stood to receive calls. He recorded viewers' comments and questions, went back into the hearing room, stood in line to use the public microphone, and played the viewers' comments and questions for the city fathers when it was his turn in line.

NATIONAL STAFF

1978-87 ■ Sue Miller Buske, Executive Director

1981-83 ■ Joan Gudgel, Administrative Assistant

1983-87 ■ Julie Omelchuck, Director of Organizational Development & Finance

1982-84 ■ Paul D'Ari, Editor *CTR* & Conference Planning

1981-83 ■ Pat Watkins, Low Power TV Project

1984-87 ■ Cynthia Chadham, Office Manager

1985-87 ■ Tegist Abhra, Administrative Assistant (1985-87)

1987-88 ■ Peter Solomon, Executive Director

1987-92 ■ Reginald Carter, Operations Manager

1988-91 ■ Sharon Ingraham, Board Chair/Acting Executive Director

1991-94 ■ T Andrew Lewis, Executive Director

1991-92 ■ Ayoka Bryant, Administrative Aide

1992 ■ Judy Saunders, Operations Assistant

1993-97 ■ Kelly Matthews, (93-94) Operations Assistant; (95-97) Director of Member Services

1995-97 ■ Barry Forbes, Executive Director; Jeffrey Hops, Director Government Relations

1996 ■ Wanda Sheridan, Conference Director

1996-97 ■ Kelly "Kay" Wolfe, Executive Assistant

1998-2001 ■ Bunnie Riedel, Executive Director

1999 ■ Margaret Juliano, Government Relations/Communications; Denise Woodson, Membership/Operations

2000-01 ■ Matthew Bennett, Government Relations/Communications; Felicia Brown, Membership/Operations; Diane Greenhalgh, Government Relations/Communications

ADDRESSES

GESTATION PERIOD

The Alternate Media Center
144 Bleecker Street
New York, New York 100012

STEERING COMMITTEE DAYS

C/o Sue Buske
Chestnut Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

INCORPORATION ADDRESS

National Federation Of Local Cable Programmers (NFLCP)
3700 Fair Hills Avenue
Kettering, Ohio 45729

FIRST "NATIONAL" OFFICE

NFLCP
906 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20003

HARD TIMES

NFLCP
P.O. Box 27290
Washington, DC 20038

NFLCP

Cambodian Embassy Building
4500 16th NW
Washington, DC 20056

TODAY

Alliance for Community Media
666 11th Street NW, Suite 740
Washington, DC 20001-4542

1966 ■ The Canadian Film Board launches Challenge for Change. Through the project, film and video-makers act as social animators who engage problem-ridden communities in dialogue and problem-solving.

1968 ■ George Stoney becomes Challenge for Change's Executive Producer.

1969 ■ Bob Devine and Steve Christianson launch Antioch College's Community Media Department, precursor to the Communications Study Center, an early training ground for community media practitioners.

1971 ■ George Stoney and Red Burns establish the Alternate Media Center at New York University with the help of a \$275,000 Markle Foundation grant to conduct experiments in community access to cable TV.

BOARD LIST

The National Federation of Local Cable Programmers became the Alliance for Community Media in 1992.

1977 ■ Founding Steering Committee
Sue Buske, Coordinator; David Hoke, Jean Rice, Ann McIntosh, Susan Bednarczyk, Mickey Brandt, Nancy Jesuale, Manuel Gonzalez, Michael Aronson.

1978 ■ NFLCP Steering Committee
Sallie E. Fischer, Chairperson; Dave Bloch, Vice-Chairperson; Carol Brown Eilber, Secretary; Manuel Gonzales, Treasurer; Sue Miller Buske, National Coordinator; Jean Rice, Cathy Enlow, Robert V. Vitale, David O'Keefe, Phillis Joffe, Lawrence E. Staab, Robert Rodriguez, Barry McQuilken, Justin Galler.

1978 ■ First Elected Board of Directors in Madison, WI—**David O'Keefe, Chairperson**, **Dave Bloch, Vice Chair** (became Chair upon illness & resignation of Chair)

1979-80 ■ **Don R. Smith, Chairperson**; Paige Amidon, Nancy Bicknell, James Bond, Tom Borrup, Phyllis Joffe, David Korte, Bruce C. Mosher, Secretary; Margie Nicholson, Anne Stonehocker, Randy Van Dalsen.

1980-81 ■ **Don R. Smith, Chairperson**; Diana Peck, Vice-Chair; Stacy Ferris, Secretary; Susan Bednarczyk, Treasurer; Jay April, James Bond, Tom Borrup, Anne Davis, Carol Brown Eilber, Adam Haas, Phyllis Joffe, Bill Makely, Anne Mundy, Margie Nicholson, Brian Owens, Carolyn Perkins, Anne Marie Piersimoni, George Stoney, Randy Van Dalsen, Greg Vawter, Michael Witsch.

1982-83 ■ **Diana Peck, Chairperson**, James Bond, Vice-Chair; Nancy Jesuale, Secretary; Susan Bednarczyk, Treasurer; Don Smith, Brian Owens, Jabari Simama, Chuck Sherwood, Greg Vawter, Glen Sayles, Anna Marie Piersimoni, Diana Peck, Anne Davis, Alvin Simpson, Jim Hall, Adam Haas, Carol Brown-Eilber, Tom Borrup, Carol Novalis, Margie Nicholson, Sandra Thomas.

1983-84 ■ **Margie Nicholson, Chairperson**; John Scott, Vice-Chair; Dave Bloch, Treasurer; Anne Davis, Secretary; Jerry Anderson, Connie Brand, Roxie Cole, Trisha Dair, Adam Haas, Frank Jamison, Frank Johnson, Jan Leshner, Diana Peck, Martha Schmidt, Chuck Sherwood, Alvin

Simpson, Jay Smith, George Stoney, Bill Tierney, Joe Van Eaton, Helen Weiss, Rika Welsh.

1984-85 ■ **Margie Nicholson, Chairperson**; Jan Leshner, Vice-Chairperson; William J. Tierney, Treasurer; Sally Roethle, Secretary; George Stoney; Dirk Koning; Rika Welsh; Trisha Dair; Frank Jamison; Fred Johnson; Lamonte Ward; Karen Kalergis; Martha Schmidt; Greg ElperWood; Alan Bushong; Jay Smith; Joe Van Eaton; Barbara Balitz; Paul Braun; Dave Olive; Chuck Sherwood, Roxie Cole; Roger Molander.

1985-86 ■ **Jan Leshner, Chairperson**; Trisha Dair, Vice President; Paul Braun, Treasurer; Frank Jamison, Secretary; Margie Nicholson; Martha Schmidt; George Stoney; Sharon Ingraham; Dirk Koning; Rika Welsh; Fred Johnson; Lamonte Ward; Steve Israelsky; Greg Epler Wood; Barbara Balitz; Alex Quinn; Susan Adams Lloyed; Dave Olive; Chuck Sherwood; Lark Samouelian; Alan Bushong; Joee Van Eaton; Roger Molander.

1986-87 ■ **Jan Leshner, Chairperson**; Trisia Dair, Treasurer; Alex Quinn, Treasurer; Sharon Ingraham, Secretary; Frank Jamison, Martha Schmidt, Dirk Koning, Rika Welsh, Fred Johnson, Steve Israelsky, Susan Adams Loyd, Chuck Sherwood, Alan Bushong, Joe Van Eaton, Tom Volgy, Nevada Hudson, Cliff Hall, Rose Rumney, Venita Peyton, Gail Copen, Jan Sanders, Ricardo Rodriguez, Tom Karwin, Jewell Ryan-White.

1987-88 ■ **Sharon Ingraham, Chairperson**; Alex Quinn, Vice Chair; Alan Bushong, Treasurer; Fred Johnson, Secretary; Debbie Lupold, Barb Wolf, Trisha Dair, Tom Volgy, Tom Karwin, Marcia Standiford, Dave Olive, Cliff Hall, Ron Cooper, Andy Beecher, Dave Keyes, Rose Rumney, Frank Turano, Gail Copen, Dirk Koning, Jan Sanders, Richard Rodriguez, Joe Van Eaton, Adam Steg, Jewell Ryan-White.

1988-89 ■ **Sharon Ingraham, Chairperson**, Alex Quinn, Vice Chair, Alan Bushong, Treasurer, Jewell Ryan-White, Secretary, Tom Taylor, Sam Behrend, Barb Wolf, Elliott Mitchell, Andy Beecher, Gerry Field, Deborah Vinsel, Joe Van Eaton, Karen Helmerston, Alan Dachman, Roxie Cole, Andrew Blau, Jack Schommer, Bridget Allen, Judy Crandall, Jeff Mansfield, Kathy Blaylock, Debbie Lupold.

1989-90 ■ **Sharon Ingraham, Chairperson**; Jewell Ryan-White, Vice Chair; Alan Bushong, Treasurer; Judy Crandall, Secretary, Sam Behrend, Mary Bennin, Andrew Blau, Kathy Blaylock, Bernard Carber, Roxie Cole, Alan Dachman, Gerry Field, Ann Flynn, Karen Helmerston, James Horwood, Elliot Mitchell, Sharon Mooney, John Moore, Rose Read, Jack Schommer, Tom Taylor, Deborah Vinsel, Barb Wolf.

1990-91 ■ **Sharon Ingraham, Chairperson**; Andrew Blau, Vice Chair; Sam Behrend, Treasurer; Judy Crandall, Secretary; Mary Bennin, Alma Arrington Brown, Ron Cooper, Ann Flynn, Atif Harden, Rick Hayes, Karen Helmerston, James Horwood, Carl Kucharski, Paula Manley, Elliot Mitchell, Sharon Mooney, Fernando Moreno, John Moore, Anthony Riddle, Jack Schommer, Catherine Shurds, Rika Welsh, Jewell Ryan-White, Barb Wolf.

1991-92 ■ **Andrew Blau, Chairman**; Fernando Moreno, Vice Chairman; Sam Behrend, Treasurer; Judy Crandall, Secretary; Mary Bennin-Cardona, Ron Cooper, Brian Girtman, Atif Harden, Rick Hayes, Karen Helmerston, James Horwood, Carl Kudharski, Julie Omelchuck, Kari Peterson, Paula Manley, Sharon Mooney, Anthony Riddle, Dorothy Thigpen, Mark Sindler, LaMonte Ward, Rika Welsh, David Vogel.

1992-93 ■ **Andrew Blau, Chairperson**; Fernando Moreno, Vice Chairperson; Kari Peterson, Secretary; Carl Kucharski, Treasurer, Fiona Boneham, Pamela Brown, Alan Bushong, Brian Girtman, Karen Helmerston, James Horwood, Brian Girtman, Karen Helmerston, James Horwood, Paula Manley, Sharon Mooney, Julie Omelchuck, Gerry Paulsen, Penelope Place, Anthony bridle, Maria Rocha, Mark Sindler, Greg Vawter, David Vogel, LaMonte Ward, Rika Welsh.

1993-94 ■ **Anthony Riddle, Chairperson**; Julie S. Omelchuck, Vice-Chairperson; Kari Peterson, Secretary, Carl Kucharski, Treasurer, Fiona Boneham, Pamela Brown alan Bushong, Paul Congo, Sue Dicile, Ann Fynn, Hap Haasch, James Horwood, Anne Michell, Sharon Mooney, Gerry Paulsen, Penelope Place, Nantz Rickard, Richard Turner, Greg Vawter, Deborah Vinsel, David Vogel, LaMonte Ward, Rika Welsh, Rob Wilson.

1971 ■ Public access is included in New York City cable franchises in Manhattan.

1960s & early 1970s ■ U.S. counter-culture movements—civil rights, free speech, anti-war, women's—provide fertile ground for many activist experiments with video as a tool to stimulate social change.

1972 ■ Home Box Office debuts; it is the first paid satellite service on cable TV.

1972 ■ The FCC, led by Nicholas Johnson, mandates public access to cable television in the top 100 television markets. Any group or individual is guaranteed up to five minutes of free channel time.

1994-95 ■ Alan Bushong, Chairman; Ann Flynn, ViceChair; Velvalee (Vel) Wiley, Treasurer, Greg Vawter, Secretary, Brian A. Wilson, Chair of Regional Chairs, Ruben Abreu, Randy Ammon, Barbara Bryant, Judy Crandall, Sue Dicile, Ron Fitzherbert, Vince Hamilton, Mike Henry, Kathleen Greenwood, James Horwood, Carl Kucharski, Paul LeValley, Debbie Manson, Julianne Murray, Anthony Riddle, Gladys Rogers, David Vogel, Rika Welsh.

1995-96 ■ Alan Bushong, Chairman; Richard D. Turner, Vice Chairman; Velvalee Wiley, Treasurer, Judy Crandall, Secretary; Brian A. Wilson, Chair of Regional Chairs, Ruben Abreu, Randy Ammon, Rob Brading, Pam Colby, Onide Coward, John Donovan, Vince Hamilton, Rich Hayes, Michael Henry, Kate Hiller, James Horwood, Debbie Manson, Erik Mollberg, John A. Rocco, Gladys Rogers, David Vogel, Sue Dicile Wedding.

1996-97 ■ Alan Bushong, Chairperson; Ann Flynn, Vice Chair; Velvalee Wiley, Treasurer; Greg Vawter, Secretary; Brian A. Wilson, Ruben Abreu, Randy Ammon, Judy Crandall, Sue Dicile-Wedding, Vince Hamilton, Mike Henry, James Horwood, Carl Kucharski, Paul LeValley, Debbie Mason, Anthony Riddle, Gladys Rogers, David Vogel.

1997-98 ■ Alan Bushong, Chairman; Richard Turner, Vice Chair; Kate Hiller, Secretary; John Donovan, Treasurer; David Vogel, Patricia Garlinghouse, Erik Mollberg; John A. Rocco, Ken Snider; Pam Colby; Brian A. Wilson, Rob Brading, Public Policy Chair; Ruben Abreu, International Chair; Judy Crandall, Organizational Dev Chair; Ric Hayes, Information Services Chair; Eitan Kushner, Conference Chair; Onida Coward; Robert Devine, Karen Toering, Velvalee (Vel) Wiley-Hooper, Sue Dicile Wedding, James Horwood, Clifford Jacobs.

1998-99 ■ Rob Brading, Chairperson; Onida Coward; Laurie Cirivello; Judy Crandall; Sue Dicile; John Donovan; Pat Garlinghouse; David Hawksworth; Ric Hayes; Jim Horwood; Eitan Kushner; Miki Lee; Serena Mann; Erik Mollberg; John Rocco; Debra Rogers; Ken Snider; Karen Toering; David Vogel, (Ruben Abreu)

1999-2000 ■ Rob Brading, Chairperson; Ric Hayes, Vice Chair; Karen Toring, Secretary; John Donovan, Treasurer; David Vogel; Patricia Garlinghouse; John A. Rocco;

Debra Rogers; Ken Snider; David Hawksworth; Laurie Cirivello; Judy D. Crandall; Eitan Kushner; Kevin Reynolds; Miki Lee; Sue Dicile; James Horwood; Serena Mann

2000-01 ■ Ric Hayes, Chairperson; Harry (Hap) Haasch Vice-Chair; David Hawksworth, Secretary; Kevin Reynolds, Treasurer; Erik Mollberg, James C. Rossi, Jr.; David Vogel; Patricia Garlinghouse; Ken Snider; Ron Cooper; John A. Rocco; Debby Rogers; Frank Clark; Paul Berg; Serena Mann; Karen Toering; Greg Vawter; James Horwood; Karyn Chalmers; Miguel Ortega, Carl Burton.

EDITORIAL BOARDS

1977 ■ Editorial Collective: Michael Aronson, Marilyn DeAngelis, Ann McIntosh, Barry McQuilken; Managing Editors: Michael Aronson, Ann McIntosh; Editorial Staff: Marilyn DeAngelis, Barry McQuilken; Contributing Editors: Gail Tolley, Steve Vedro

1978 ■ Editorial Collective: Brian Cosgrove, Marilyn DeAngelis, Ann McIntosh, Barry McQuilken; Contributing Editors: Mickey Brandt, Jean Rice, Steve Vedro, Paige Amidon, Marta Peck, Susan Bednarczyk.

1979 ■ Managing Editor: Tom Borrup; Editorial Staff: Lou DiLiberto, Sharon Goldenberg, Phyllis Joffe, Lise Steinzor; Contributing Editors: Paige Amidon, Sue Miller Buske, Bert Cowlan, Anne Davis, Carol Brow-Eilber, Ray Gallagher, Margie Nicholson, Carolyn Perkins, Jean Rice.

1980 ■ Editors: Tom Borrup, Phyllis Joffe, Ann McIntosh; Contributing Editors: Paige Amidon, Susan Bednarczyk, Jean Rice, Ray Gallagher; Contributors: Drew Shaffer, Sallie Fischer, Sue Miller Buske, David Hoke; Editorial Staff: Peter Brown, Lou DiLiberto, Sharon Goldenberg, Lise Steinzor, Nancy Bicknell, Constance Carlson, Bert Cowlan, Anne Davis, Ben Davis, Carol Brown-Eilber, Ray Gallagher, Margie Nicholson, Carolyn Perkins, Jean Rice. Editorial Assistant: Diana Peck, Les Brown, Brian Owens, Nancy Jesuale, Harriet Moss, George Stoney, Helen Weiss, Dorothy Todd Henault, Bill Makley, Jay April, David Block, Randy Van Dalsen, Delores Jones

1981 ■ Editor: Tom Borrup; Associate Editor: Phyllis Joffe; Editorial Assistant: Margaret Schultz; Contributing Editors: Jay April, Paige Amidon, Susan Bednarczyk, Dave Bloch, Les Brown, Carol Brown-Eilber, Sue Miller Buske, Constance Carlson, Paul D'Ari, Lou DiLiberto, Sallie Fischer, Sharon Goldenberg, Adam Haas, Nancy Jesuale, Larry Johnson, Bill Makley; Contributing Editors: Jay Harriet Moss, Bill Newbern, Margie Nicholson, Brian Owens, Diana Peck, Jerry Richter, Jabari Simama, Lise Steinzor, George Stoney, Paige Amidon, Dave Bloch, Less Brown, Constance Carlson, Ed Deane, Ann Marie Piersimoni, Jerry Richter, William F. Rushton, Don Smith, Lise Steinzor, Pat Watkins; Contributing Editors: James Bond, Bill Bakely, Rob McCausland, Lily Ollinger, Lynne Bradley, Don Langley, Marjie Lundell, Rob McCausland, Lilly Ollinger, Chuck Sherwood.

1982 ■ Editor: Tom Borrup; Assistant Editor: Margaret Schulz; Associate Editors: Susan Bednarczyk, Phyllis Joffe; Contributing Editors: Jay April, Paige Amidon, James Bond, Lynne Bradley, Les Brown, Carol Brown-Eilber, Sue Miller Buske, Constance Carlson, Paul D'Ari, Ed Deane, Lou DiLiberto, Sallie Fischer, Sharon Goldenberg, Nancy Jesuale, Don Langley, Marjie Lundell, Bill Makely, Rob McCausland, Margie Nicholson, Lilly Anna Marie Piersimoni, Jerry Richter, William F. Rushton, Chuck Sherwood, Jabari Simama, Don Smith, Lise Steinzor, George Stoney, Pat Watkins.

1983 ■ Editorial Board: Susan Bednarczyk, Trisha Dair, Jean Rice, Bill Rushton, George Stoney; Managing Editor: Joan Gudgel; Editor: Tom Borrup; Assistant Editors: Kevin Diaz and Joan Gudgel; Contributing Editors: Jay April, Paige Amidon, James Bond, Lynne Bradley, Les Brown, Carol Brown-Eilber, Sue Miller Buske, Constance Carlson, Paul D'Ari, Ed Deane, Lou DiLiberto, Sallie Fischer, Sharon Goldenberg, Nancy Jesuale, Don Langley, Marjie Lundell, Bill Makely, Rob McCausland, Margie Nicholson, Lilly Ollinger, Brian Owens, Diana Peck, Anna Marie Piersimoni, Jerry Richter, Chuck Sherwood, Jabari Simama, Don Smith, Lise Steinzor, Pat Wilkins.

1984 ■ Editorial Board: Susan Bednarczyk, Trish Dair, Jean Rice, Bill Rushton, George Stoney; Managing Editor: Joan Gudgel

1973 ■ The Alternate Media Center dispatches community organizers across the country to help set up public access centers.

1976 ■ The National Federation of Local Cable Programmers is established as an outgrowth of the Alternate Media Center to strengthen the growing U.S. network of public access centers and activists.

1978 ■ Madison, Wisconsin is the site of the first NFLCP national convention.

1978 ■ George Stoney receives the NFLCP's first Achievement in Humanistic Communication award, thereafter named in his honor.

1985 ■ Editorial Board: Susan Bednarczyk, Trisha Dair, Jean Rice, Bill Rushton, George Stoney, Steve Israelsky, Margie Nicholson; Managing Editor: Paul D'Ari

1986 ■ Editorial Board: Susan Bednarczyk, Trisha Dair, Jean Rice, Bill Rushton, George Stoney, Steve Israelsky, Margie Nicholson; Managing Editor: Paul D'Ari.

1987 ■ Editorial Board: Susan Bednarczyk, Tricia Dair, Jean Rice, Bill Rushton, George Stoney, Steve Israelsky, Margie Nicholson, Dirk Koning, Diana Peck; Managing Editor: Dave Bloch.

1988 ■ Editor in Chief: Dirk Koning, Editorial Board: Jean Rice, Margie Nicholson, Tom Karwin, Diana Peck, Jack Schommer, George Stoney; Managing Editor: Dave Olive.

1989 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, Fred Johnson, Tom Darwin, Diana Peck, Randy Van Dalsen; Editor In Chief: Tom Karwin.

1990 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, Fred Johnson, Tom Karwin, Diana Peck, Jack Schommer, George Stoney, Randy Van Dalsen; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Tom Karwin, Fred Johnson.

1991 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, Rick Hayes, Fred Johnson, Tom Karwin, Martha Schmidt, George Stoney, Randy Van Dalsen, Sue Miller Buske, Tim Goodwin, Lynn Carrillo, Heidi Mau, Martha Schmidt, Jim Skelly; Guest Editors in Chief: Sue Buske, Dirk Koning, Karen Helmersen, Fred Johnson, Martha Schmidt; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

1992 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, Rick Hayes, Lynn Carrillo, Tom Karwin, Martha Schmidt, Jim Skelly, Paula Manley, Larry Beer, Bob Devine, Vel Wiley, Sabrina Zachery. Guest Editors in Chief: Fred Johnson, Heidi Mau, Lynn Carrillo-Cruz, Paula Manley, Martha Schmidt, Thomas J. Karwin; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

1993 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, Deb Vinsel, Larry Beer, Bob Devine, Heidi Mau, Vel Wiley, Sabrina Zachery, Tom Borup, Lou DiLiberto, Sharon Goldenberg, Phyllis Joffe, Lise Steinzor, Paula Manley, Lynn Carillo-Cruz, Sabrina Zachery; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Martha Schmidt, Lauren-Glenn Davitian, Bob Devine, jesikah maria ross, Fred Johnson; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

1994 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Deb Vinsel, Larry Beer, Bob Devine, Heidi Mau,

Vel Wiley, Sabrina Zachery; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Paula Manley and Robin Reidy; Managing Editors: Tim Goodwin, Jim Peters

1995 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Sally Alvarez, Barry Forbes, Mary Bennin Cardona, Hans Klein, Vel Wiley, Brian Wilson; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Carl Kucharski, Deborah Vinsel, Dirk Koning, Bob Devine, Uriel Grunfeld; Coordinating Editor: Jim Peters.

1996 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Sally Alvarez, Mary Bennin Cardona, Hans Klein, Brian Wilson, Editors-in-Chief: Howard Davis and Vel Wiley; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Howard Davis, Vel Wiley, Mimi Graney, Roberto Arevalo, Dirk Koning, Deborah Vinsel, Sally Alvarez, Hans Klein; Coordinating Editor: Jim Peters.

1997 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Sally Alvarez, Cardona, Hans Klein, Brian Wilson, Guest Editors-In-Chief: Mary Bennin Cardona & Bob Devine; Coordinating Editors: Jim Peters and Lorraine Richey.

1998 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Ric Hayes, Autumn Labbe-Renault, Barbara Parker, Todd Samusson, and Charles Williams; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Kate Hiller, Todd Samusson, Fred Johnson, Ric Hayes; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

1999 ■ Editorial Board: Dirk Koning, chair, Pat Garlinghouse, Jeffrey Hansell, Lucille Frasca Harrigan, Wally Keniston, Jennifer A. Krebs, Charles Williams; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Dirk Koning, David Hawksworth, Deborah Vinsel, Jennifer Krebs, Pat Garlinghouse; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

2000 ■ Dirk Koning, chair, Pat Garlinghouse, Jeffrey Hansell, Lucille Frasca Harrigan, John Higgins, Jennifer A. Krebs; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Jennifer A. Krebs, Jeffrey Hansell, Matthew Bennett, Lucille Frasca Harrigan; Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin.

2001 ■ Dirk Koning, chair, Pat Garlinghouse, Jeffrey Hansell, Lucille Frasca Harrigan, John Higgins, Jennifer A. Krebs; Guest Editors-in-Chief: Laurie Cirivello, Renee Hobbs, Rika Welsh. Managing Editor: Tim Goodwin

Apologies for names omitted or misspelled. This list eventually will appear on CMR's website at www.communitymediareview.org. If you have corrections or additions to the information on these pages, please contact CMR Managing Editor Tim Goodwin at goodwin@usxc.net

THANKS

We thank all those who have contributed in large and in small ways to putting this issue together. It has been a pleasure to work with so many dedicated and helpful people. As this issue "goes to bed" and the task is finally done, we sincerely hope that should your name not be among these, you will understand that the eyes are bleary, but the gratitude is great and no less inclusive of you too!

Special thanks to: All of the contributing authors and Lee Ann Small, Dianne O'Brian, Jeff Hansell, Melissa Mills, Jennifer Krebs, Carl Kucharski, Lynne Goodwin, Charles Welsh, Abi Vasquez, Andrew Blau, Ida Shunk, Anita Stech, Ruth Stenger, Marshall Parker, Lillie Oliver, Ric Hayes, Norman Cowie, Randy Visser, Rumpy. Walt Bakes, Judi Kelleman, Rachel Webster, Kaye Bazuin, Grandville Printing Company, and CMR advertisers.

And thanks again to the Central States, Western States and Northwest Regions, and Antioch College, for their financial contributions to help make this commemorative edition possible.

SUBMISSIONS

Many of the materials in this issue have had to be cut due to space considerations. We apologize to those authors and contributors whose words did not make it into these pages. We invite you to eventually find submitted materials, in their entirety, at the Community Media Review's website www.communitymediareview.org.

For further information and for on-line availability of materials in this issue, contact Jeff Hansell at jeffhansell@zdnetwork.com

The editors welcome notation of any omissions or errors. Please send your additions, corrections and/or comments to CMR Managing Editor Tim Goodwin at goodwin@usxc.net

1979 ■ In *FCC v. Midwest Video Corporation*, the Supreme Court rules the FCC does not have statutory authority to require public access to cable TV. The struggle to protect access moves to the local level.

1980 ■ Sue Buske becomes the NFLCP's first executive director.

1980 ■ NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors) is formed in Madison, WI, with some inspiration from the NFLCP.

1981 ■ New York-based-Paper Tiger TV collective begins producing homespun critiques of mainstream media and the cultural industry. Paper Tiger videos are widely "bicycled" to public access channels around the U.S.

TIMELINE

20,000 BC ■ drawings on cave walls, antlers and rocks
2000 BC ■ Egyptians develop hieroglyphics
2000-1500 ■ Semites develop the first alphabet.
105 AD ■ Chinese invent paper and ink.
1034 ■ Chinese invent moveable clay type.
1450 ■ Gutenberg invents moveable metal type.
1564 ■ the graphite pencil developed in England.
1840 ■ Samuel Morse inaugurates the telegraph.
1826 ■ first permanent photograph.
1843 ■ first fax machine patented by Scottish inventor Alexander Bain.
1876 ■ Alexander Graham Bell receives patent for the telephone. "Mr. Watson, come here. I want you."
1878 ■ Thomas Edison receives patent for the phonograph.
1895 ■ Auguste and Louis Lumiere show their first movie in Paris.
1896 ■ Guglielmo Marconi patents the radio.
1919 ■ First regular radio broadcast in Pittsburgh, PA.
1926 ■ Philo T. Farnsworth invents the cathode ray tube.
1926 ■ First successful transatlantic radio-telephone conversation between New York and London.
1927 ■ President Coolidge signed a bill creating the Federal Radio Commission, forerunner of the Federal Communications Commission.
1927 ■ A New York audience sees an image of Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover in

the first successful long-distance demonstration of television.
1934 ■ Congress passes the Communications Act of 1934 establishing the Federal Communications Commission.
1948 ■ First cable systems built in Landsford and Manoy, PA.
1961 ■ Federal Communications Commission chairman Newton N. Minow condemns television programming as a "vast wasteland."
1965 ■ Cable television has 1.57 million subs, about 3 percent of U.S. homes.
1966 ■ Canadian government inaugurates Challenge for Change, forerunner of the public access movement.
1966 ■ Xerox introduces the first general purpose fax machine.
1968 ■ Sony introduces the first port-a-pac, weighing in at a hefty 20 pounds.
1968 ■ First community-operated closed-circuit television channel in the U.S. begins in Dale City, Virginia.
1971 ■ First designated public access cable channels begin in New York City.
1971 ■ Alternate Media Center established at New York University, thanks to \$275,000 from the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation.
1972 ■ Through the efforts of Commissioner Nicholas Johnson, FCC sets national access standards for cable systems in the top 100 markets.
1972 ■ Sony introduces the first 3/4" video cassette recorder.
1972 ■ Austin [TX] Community Television found-

ed.
1975 ■ National Federation of Community Broadcasters founded, inspiring creation of the NFLCP a year later.
1975 ■ Home Box Office [HBO] begins satellite distribution of its pay programming, revolutionizing the cable industry.
1976 ■ The NFLCP (National Federation of Local Cable Programmers), now the Alliance for Community Media, is founded.
1976 ■ NFLCP folks address the FCC for the first time.
1977 ■ First issue of the NFLCP newsletter, predecessor to Community Media Review, published in June.
1977 ■ Municipal access begins in Manhattan, NYC.
1978 ■ Some 240 media activists attend first NFLCP Conference in Madison, Wisconsin, where the Hometown USA Video Festival debuts.
1978 ■ George Stoney receives the NFLCP's first Achievement in Humanistic Communication award, thereafter named in his honor.
1978 ■ First National Cable Television Association convention held in New Orleans, and the NFLCP is there
1979 ■ The NFLCP Newsletter becomes Community Television Review.
1979 ■ Goddard College in Vermont offers the fourth year of its Community Media Program, June-August.
1980 ■ Sue Buske becomes the NFLCP's first executive director.
1980 ■ NFLCP opposition contributes to defeat of Senate Bill 2827, which would have

prohibited local, state or federal requirements for cable access
1980 ■ NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors) is formed in Madison, WI, with some inspiration from the NFLCP.
1981 ■ NFLCP office moves to Washington, DC.
1982 ■ AT&T agrees to divest under anti-trust pressure from the Justice Department, creating the "baby bells."
1986 ■ NFLCP celebrates 10th Anniversary at conference in San Francisco.
1987 ■ Sue Buske receives NFLCP's first annual Leadership Award, thereafter named in her honor.
1987 ■ Over 50 percent of U.S. homes subscribe to cable television.
1988 ■ Alliance for Communications Democracy founded.
1991 ■ NFLCP turns 15.
1994 ■ *Community Television Review [CTR]* becomes *Community Media Review [CMR]*.
1994 ■ Curtis Henderson receives Alliance's first annual Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity.
1996 ■ President Clinton signs legislation revamping the telecommunications industry, saying it would "bring the future to our doorstep."
2001 ■ We're still waiting at our doorsteps.

1984 ■ The Cable Communications Act of 1984 deregulates cable rates. The Act endorses access and allows local governments to require Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access channels and provisions in local cable franchises.

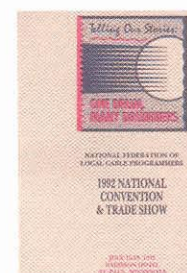
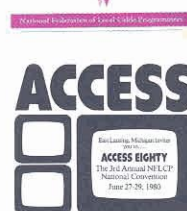
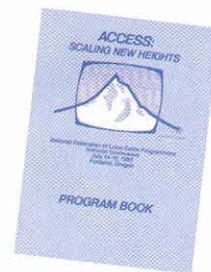
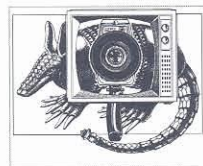
According to the Act, local governments may collect 5 percent in cable franchise fees and are no longer required to spend franchise fees solely on "cable related purposes."

mid-1980s ■ The cable industry pursues a campaign (ongoing today) to eliminate access provisions from local cable franchises.

1986 ■ Deep Dish TV, the first national public access TV network, is established.

CONFERENCES

- 1978 ■ Madison, WI • 1st Annual
- 1979 ■ Austin, TX • 2nd Annual
- 1980 ■ East Lansing, MI • Access '80
- 1981 ■ Atlanta, GA • Access: Coming of Age
- 1982 ■ St. Paul, MN • Exploring Community Television
- 1983 ■ Portland, OR • Access: Scaling New Heights
- 1984 ■ Denver, CO • Community Programming: Managing the Hidden Resources
- 1985 ■ Boston, MA • Community TV: Charting New Waters
- 1986 ■ San Francisco, CA • NFLCP 10th Anniversary
- 1987 ■ Chicago, IL • Community Programming: Voices of Diversity
- 1988 ■ Tampa, FL • Channels for Change
- 1989 ■ Dallas, TX • The Video Frontier
- 1990 ■ Washington, DC • Advocate
- 1991 ■ Portland, OR • Voices of Democracy: Celebrating the First Amendment
- 1992 ■ St. Paul, MN • One Drum, Many Drummers
- 1993 ■ Atlanta, GA • Cultural Diversity: Weaving Common Threads
- 1994 ■ Honolulu, HI • Protect the Voice, Perpetuate the Vision
- 1995 ■ Boston, MA • Community Media: Thriving in the Technology Revolution
- 1996 ■ Arlington, VA • We the People: Building Community Through Media
- 1997 ■ Milwaukee, WI • Access: Building Community Through Media
- 1998 ■ Portland, OR • Community Media from Vision to Action
- 1999 ■ Cincinnati, OH • Building Bridges to each other in the next Century
- 2000 ■ Tucson, AZ • Tucson 2000
- 2001 ■ Washington, DC • 25th Anniversary 1976-2001
- 2002 ■ Houston, TX • Celebrate Diversity
- 2003 ■ Tacoma, WA
- 2004 ■ Tampa, FL



CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE HEROES

Stellar diehards exist in every organization and in every movement, yet how do you identify who are the real heroes? Our feeling is that you look around and ask: "Who has been there for the entire effort?" In our case, a few stand out...

18 Conferences	Jim Horwood and Deb Vinsal
19 Conferences	Alan Bushong, Sam Behrend, Steve Fortriede
20 Conferences	Dirk Koning, Rika Welsh, Chuck Sherwood, Carl Kucharski

21 Conferences

22 Conferences

And the gold star of perfect attendance at all 24 conferences goes to **Sue Buske and Randy VanDalsen**!

These attendance 'stats' were compiled through the Alliance List Serve, so their accuracy is subject to the effectiveness of the polling tools used. If you or someone you know deserves to be on this list, contact us at goodwin@usxc.net



1991 Paper Tiger and Deep Dish produce *The Gulf Crisis TV Project* in response to the war and the mainstream media's role. With material from 40 states and overseas, it features a video teach-in and is seen on more than 100 public access and PBS outlets.

1992 The Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992 re-regulates basic cable service rates in response to widespread price gouging by the cable industry.

1992 The NFLCP changes its name to Alliance for Community Media.

1994 *Community Television Review [CTR]* becomes *Community Media Review [CMR]*.

RESOURCES

IN PRINT

COMPILED BY JOHN W. HIGGINS

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ON THE WEB

- Ad Busters. From Media Foundation. "Culture Jamming." www.adbusters.org
- A-Infos Radio Project. Share alternative radio programs via the Internet. www.radio4all.net
- Alliance for Community Media. www.alliancecm.org
- AMARC. French acronym for the World Association of Community-Oriented Radio Broadcasters. www.web.apc.org/amarcl
- Deep Dish TV. The first grassroots satellite network in the U.S. www.igc.apc.org/deepdish
- Fairness and Accuracy in Media (FAIR). Media watch group. www.fair.org/
- Free Speech Internet Television. Media activists. Distribution of alternative video and audio programs through the Internet and satellite TV. www.freespeech.org/
- Global Channel C.A.T. Good listing of Community Access Television sites around the world. www.openchannel.se/cat/
- Independent Media Center. Media activist groups first organized to "broadcast" news and grassroots reports from the WTO meeting in Seattle, November 1999. The organization has spread around the globe. Local Indy Media sites are listed on the left hand side of the page. www.indymedia.org
- Media Alliance. Training and advocacy for media activism. www.media-alliance.org/

1996 The 1996 Telecommunications Act, under the guise of promoting competition, eliminates media cross-ownership restrictions and the prohibition on phone companies entering the cable business. A wave of media mergers ensues. The

Alliance for Community Media is successful in inserting "level playing field" language into the Act subjecting phone companies providing cable service to comparable PEG Access requirements.

1996 In a landmark case, Alliance for Community Media v. FCC, the Supreme Court strikes down provisions of the 1992 Cable Act, and related FCC implementation rules, which would enable cable companies to censor PEG Access channels.

1996 Regional Bell operating companies, aka Baby Bells, introduce legislation in several states to eliminate local cable franchising and local control over public rights of way.

MicroPower Radio — Links to Sites (from Free Radio Berkeley)
www.freeradio.org/mpb/mpworld.html

Paper Tiger TV. "Smashing the Myths of the Information Industry" with alternative video programming.
www.papertiger.org

Project Censored. The Top 10 Censored Stories of the Year—since 1976.
www.sonoma.edu/ProjectCensored/

Video Activist Network.
 Association of artists, media and social activists.
www.videoactivism.org/



Longest running live show. John Tesch, president of Somerville [MA] Community Access Television, and the Somerville Producers Group have logged more than 500 live shows of Dead Air, Live since it debuted in 1974.

1976 & 2000 US VITALS

COMPILED BY CARL KUCHARSKI

Television Stations:

Commercial -

1976 - 701

2001 - 1,290

Educational/PBS -

1976 - 259

2001 - 370

Network TV Billings (ABC, CBS, NBC):

1976 - \$2,991,600,000

1999 - \$9,989,300,000

Radio Stations:

AM -

1976 - 4,540

2000 - 4,685

FM -

1976 - 3,920

2000 - 8,032

Television Sets Produced:

B&W -

1976 - 5,937,000

1999 - 50,000

Color

1976 - 8,194,000

1999 - 23,218,000

VCRs in Use:

1976 - 80,000

2000 - 205,290,000

Cable TV Systems:

1976 - 3,681

2001 - 10,300

Cable TV Subscribers:

1976 - 10,800,000

2001 - 67,200,000

PEG Access Centers

in Operation:

1976 - less than 150 (estimate)

2001 - more than 1500

Number of Telephones in Use -

137,762,000

1976 Per Capita Income -

\$5,448.00

Number of Millionaires -

121,000

Number of persons in poverty -

22,973,000

Federal Budget

\$325,133,000,000 with a \$44 billion dollar deficit

1998 The Alliance for Community Media launches the Media & Democracy Campaign to promote community media and raise awareness of the anti-democratic nature of media consolidation.

2001 The Alliance celebrates its 25th Anniversary at its annual International Conference and Trade Show, held this year in Washington, DC.

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- Site Negotiations and Feasibility Studies
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- Network and I-Net Development

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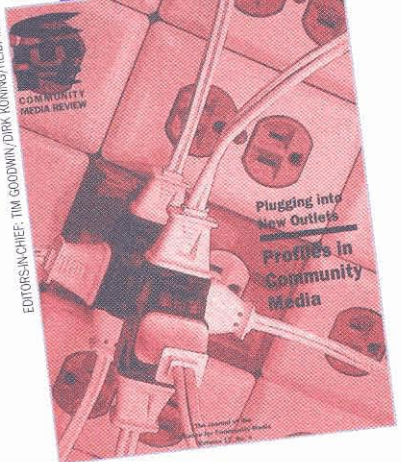
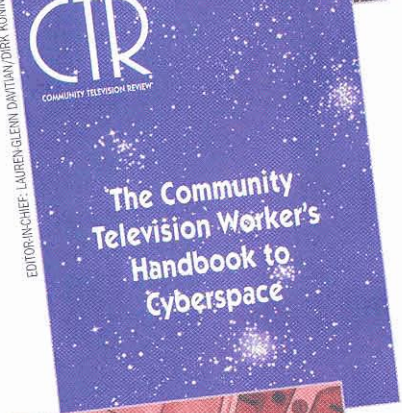
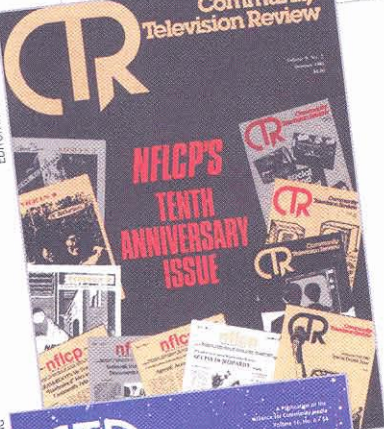
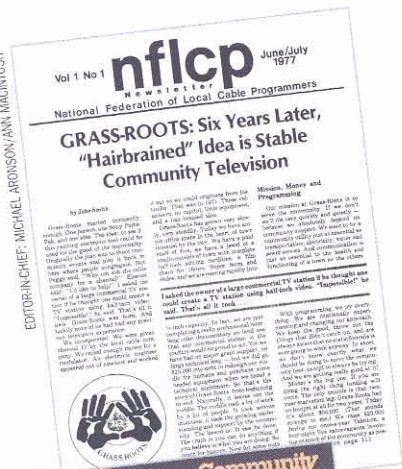
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Congratulations ACM — 25 Years!



And finally, a word about CMR

BY TIM GOODWIN

Reading through 24 years of Alliance publications in preparation for the Alliance's 25th Anniversary edition of *Community Media Review* is an experience in déjà vu. Many of the names on its pages resonate throughout the years, folks such as George Stoney, Sue Buske and Dirk Koning. So do many of the issues. Vigilance comes to mind as one key aspect reflected in the journals' pages, whether it's convincing Congress or city councils, battling courts or cable [media] companies, or sharing our experiences in building community through media. The pages are rich in content and history, the most valuable chronicle our movement has.

Fortunately there's been this medium to preserve that institutional memory. Almost as long as there's been an Alliance [NFLCP], there's been a publication to serve it, from the bimonthly *NFLCP Newsletter* in 1977 to the quarterly *Community Media Review* in 2001, and for many years in between, *Community Television Review*.

I'm only the latest in a long line of managing editors that began with Michael Aronson and Ann McIntosh and included Tom Borup, Dave Bloch and Paul D'Ari among others. Scores of others have served on its editorial board and as guest editors over the years. Interestingly, this current issue of *CMR* was done partly at guest Editor-in-Chief Rika Welsh's in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where some of those early issues of the *Newsletter* were likewise produced.

The biggest change to *CMR* over the years however, is the unseen one, the way it is produced. As much as technology has changed video, it's revolutionized printing. When Michael and Ann started, and even when I started doing *CTR* in 1991, it was still cut and paste. Type was set by phototypesetters on photographic paper, photos mechanically converted to halftones, all of it trimmed and waxed and physically placed on pages that were taken to a printing company, where they were photographed to film, stripped, plated and printed. And that was

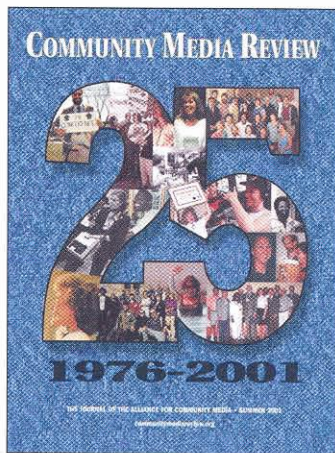
easier than it had been a generation earlier.

I had to wonder a decade ago when former Alliance Chair Andrew Blau told me that internet connectivity would become more ubiquitous than fax machines, but today *CMR* is totally digitized, from text and pictures to ads. It goes to press on a CD (almost 300 meg this issue), from where it goes directly to plate, skipping film, for printing. Only the lack of a broadband connection keeps me from sending it to the printing company from my desk. Just as amazing, there have been issues (this one excepted), where there has never been a telephone call between a guest editor and me, thanks to email (approaching a thousand this issue). I do by myself what I had to hire staff and contractors to do ten years ago. Better living through technology, at least for publishers and videographers.

It would have been impossible to predict the changes twenty years ago when I became involved in community media. Similar attempts now would be silly. *CMR* likely still will be printed as long as there is an organization. Despite the digital age, more magazines are printed today than ever before, and those longtimers in the Alliance know how resilient *CMR* has become over the past quarter century.

More pressing ahead is preservation of what is behind us, a digital archives of past issues. *CMR* is moving to an online version [www.communitymediareview.org], but there are more than two decades of printed *Newsletters*, *CTRs*, and *CMRs* that could be open in the spirit of our democratic communications to everyone with an internet connection. What a resource for the movement that would be. Converting that dream to reality is the next challenge.

Tim Goodwin has been managing editor of *CTR/CMR* since 1991, with time out from 1994-1997 as a US Peace Corps business volunteer in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. He owns City Media, Inc., a cottage publishing company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is the founding president of the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids. Contact him at goodwin@usxc.net.



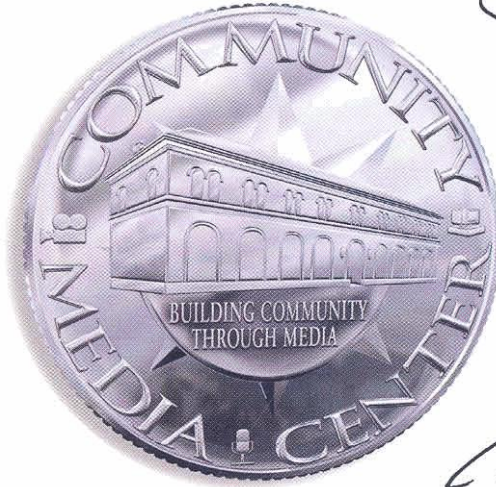
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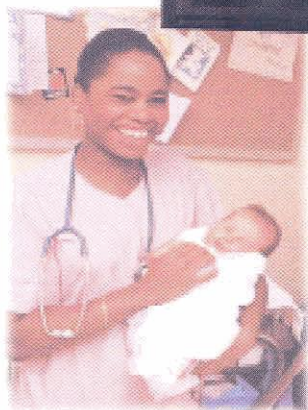


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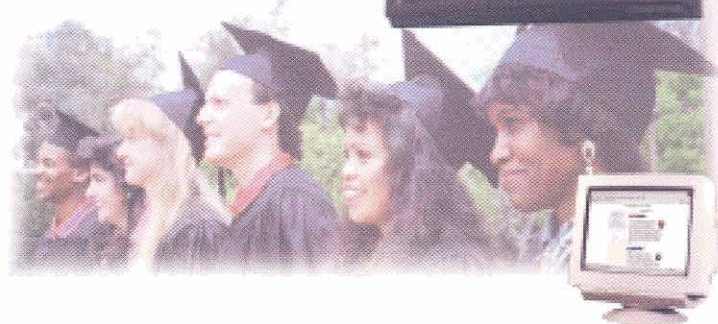
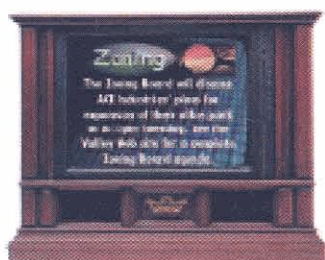
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